

Suggestions for  
THE TEACHING OF  
ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION  
AND SPELLING  
in India

*THE LETTERS AND SOUNDS  
OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE*

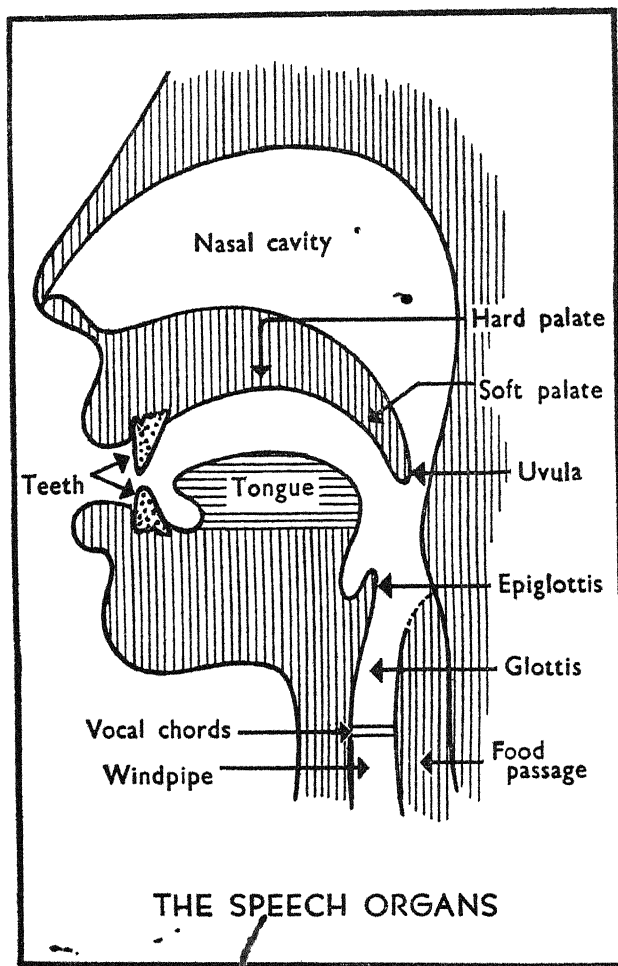
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TO  
MY WIFE



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## INTRODUCTION

*'And, in short, it seems to me,  
Sounds and letters disagree.'*

A LONG teaching experience in colleges in the east has shown me that the chief difficulty a foreigner has to contend with in learning English is its anomalous spelling. The average Indian student, for example, soon picks up English as a spoken language, and learns to speak in English very creditably ; but when he comes to write in English, it is another matter. Then he is up against the spelling problem, a problem which he rarely solves with complete success. Nor can we wonder at his comparative failure, when we consider how blind a guide is our pronunciation to our spelling. Not to dwell on that classic of spelling absurdities, 'ough' with its eight different sounds, what is one whose native tongue is not English to make of a language in which (far from one sign standing for one sound, and one sound having but one sign) one vowel sign may denote as many as seven different vowel sounds (as, for example, 'ou' does—in *cloud*, *soul*, *touch*, *youth*, *could*, *bought*, and *journey*) ? And one vowel sound may be represented by as many as eight vowel letters or signs (like the long 'e' sound ('ee') in *me*, *mete*, *meet*, *meat*, *field*, *seize*, *Caesar*, *police*—not to speak of such spelling oddities as *quay*, *key*, *people*) ? As a matter of fact, owing to various historical reasons, our English spelling has lost touch with our pronunciation. It does not amount to a divorce, nor even to a judicial separation ; but, like too many married couples, these two have simply drifted apart ; and nothing but a radical spelling reform can bring them together again into the state of holy wedlock. As matters now stand, English spelling in relation to pronunciation is in what Mr Walter Ripman well calls 'an unholy muddle'.

While our spelling is in a muddle, our pronunciation, on the other hand, has become regularized, so that educated English people now speak what is called Standard English. This has been brought about during the last century by the wide spread of education, and by some other influences. The great English public schools, staffed by Oxford and Cambridge men, and drawing boys from all over the country ; the great improvement in the secondary education of girls who, in time, as mothers or teachers, impart the correct accent to the children ; free and compulsory education, which penetrates into the remotest villages ; the improved means of communication, by which people of all parts and classes come into contact with each other , and the great popularity of broadcasting, which carries cultured speaking into almost every home—all these influences have resulted in making speech more or less uniform among the educated classes. They have all done their part in raising the standard of spoken English and unifying pronunciation. This does not, of course, mean that all the people in the British Isles speak alike. They do not. Apart from individual differences in pronunciation, even among the better educated, the old dialects are still spoken extensively in country places. The dialects are not corruptions of standard English speech, than which they are very much older. They are survivals of ancient forms of English, as spoken in olden times in different parts of the country. Modern standard English has developed out of one of these old dialects which, by the accidents of history, gradually prevailed over the others.

In the eighth century it looked as if the Anglian dialect of Northumbria, in which the Venerable Bede and the poet Cædmon wrote, was going to set the standard for the English tongue ; but under King Alfred, in the ninth century, the speech of the West Saxons (now represented by the dialects of Wilts and Dorset) came to be regarded as the literary language of the country ; and it so remained until after the Norman Conquest in the eleventh century.

Eventually, however, one of the dialects of Mercia, or the Midlands of England, established itself by the fourteenth century, and it was in this East Midland speech that Chaucer wrote, and Wyclif translated the Bible. The reason for this was that the East Midland dialect was the language of London, the capital and seat of the royal court, and of the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. So it came to pass that modern Standard English has developed out of an old Mercian dialect, that of the East Midlands. This form of speech was finally confirmed as 'English' by the fact that up to the end of the eighteenth century the south of England was by far the most thickly populated, the most enterprising, and the most wealthy part of the country. Had the Industrial Revolution, which shifted the balance of population, enterprise and wealth from the south of England to the north, come three centuries earlier than it did, it is possible that modern English speech would have been more akin to Scotch or the dialects of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Northumberland, than to that of, say, Middlesex.

The dialects differ from standard English in several ways. For one, in pronunciation. A Yorkshireman says, for example, 'a foin noit', for 'a fine night'; in Lancashire you will hear, 'Mooother, bring soom booter' (for 'Mother, bring some butter'); a Cockney would say, 'That lidy with the biby' as a pretty fice', for 'lady', 'baby', 'face'; a Somerset man will say, 'Ah zee the' a-zittin' on th' zee-at' for 'I saw you sitting on the seat'; a West Riding man will say 'Oop ta' day-al', and 'Shoot gay-at' (for 'up the dale' and 'shut the gate'); while in Cumberland they say, 'Shet yat'. For another, the dialects have many words of their own, which are unknown in standard English. These are good old English words, many of them vigorous, pithy and very expressive; and it is a pity that some of them are not taken up into standard English. Such words as the Yorkshire 'vitty' for trim, in order; and 'slape', slippery; the Lancashire 'jannok', straight.



honest; the Lincolnshire 'clat' for to mess about with water, the Lancashire 'thronged' for busy; the Scotch 'braw' for fine, grand--are all good words, and there are hundreds more. Lastly, dialect speech often has its own intonations, some having a very charming lilt. This verse in the Aberdeenshire dialect of Scotch will serve to show how very different is dialect speech from standard English.

'She that was swippert at the hairst,  
And swack about the byre,  
Gangs hirplin' ower the pavin' stones  
Wi' feet that stoon wi' tire.'<sup>1</sup>

It would be a pity if ever the old dialects died out altogether, for in some of them there is much beauty and charm. They remind one of the more permanent, the unchanging, or slowly changing, things of life. Mr de la Mare has said that dialect words were 'made, used and loved by those who were unlearned in books, but had keen and lively eyes in their heads, quick to see the delight and livingness of a thing, and the wits to give it a name fitting it as close as a skin'. As, however, Standard English spreads, the old dialects will, in all probability, fade away.

To come back to the spelling problem, we may well ask how the divorce of spelling from pronunciation, and the confusion between letters and sounds, has come about. To begin with, no spoken language is rigid, and fixed for all time. It is a living thing, that grows and changes, sloughing off old and outworn words and constructions, adopting new ones from other languages, enriching its vocabulary from widening experience and growing knowledge, slowly changing in pronunciation, and never remaining 'in one stay'. So, if the spelling of its words does not keep pace with changes in their pronunciation, pronunciation and spelling gradually drift apart. Even in a century, the pronunciation of certain words in educated speech may

<sup>1</sup> Which, being interpreted, is: She that has been busy with the harvest and active about the cow-shed, goes limping over the paving-stones with feet that ache with tiredness

alter; for Alexander Pope, in the eighteenth century, pronounced *tea* as 'tai', *oblige* as 'oableej', and *yet* as 'yit', as is shown by his rimes. With regard to the history of English spelling, when English was first expressed in writing the Latin letters were used, with the values they had in the spoken Latin of the time. English spelling has suffered ever since in one way; for Latin did not have separate signs for the long and short vowels, and in consequence English has had to rub along with only the five vowel letters (a, e, i, o, u) for at least double the number of vowel sounds. Next, when the Normans came, they spelt English words according to their sounds in French; so they spelt, for example, the English word *hus* (pronounced 'hoos', like *loose*), *hous*, because in French 'ou' had that sound (as in *tout*, 'too'). This spelling in time led to the modern pronunciation, 'house'. Likewise, as they could not pronounce the guttural sound of 'gh' (which was probably like the German 'ch' in *buch*, and the Scotch 'ch' in *loch*), they dropped it in speaking, and 'gh' became mute in such words as *plough*, *daughter*, *high*, etc. Then in the Renaissance period, in the sixteenth century, when classical Latin and Greek were eagerly studied, scholars noticed that many English words were derived from the Latin, though many of these had come to us through French, in which language their pronunciation had been altered. For instance, the French spelt and pronounced the Latin *perfectum*, *parfait*, the 'c' being omitted and 'i' put in instead. English pedants restored the Latin 'c', and spelt the English word *parfit* or *parfet*, as it was then pronounced, *parfaict*, though it still continued to be pronounced without the 'c'. Eventually, the new spelling prevailed over the old pronunciation so that today we say 'perfekt', sounding the Latin 'c'. The words *debt*, *doubt* and *fault* have the same history. They were in English, *dete*, *dout*, and *faute*, and so pronounced. The scholars inserted a 'b' into the first two, to bring them into line with the Latin *debita* and *dubitare*, and an 'l' into *faute*, because the Latin word

was *fallere*; and the words came to be spelt—*debt*, *doubt*, *fault*. The inserted 'l' came at last to be pronounced in *fault*, simply from this new spelling; but to this day the 'b' in *debt* and *doubt* is mute, and so useless. These are illustrations of the fact that a change in pronunciation has sometimes influenced the spelling, and that a new spelling has sometimes actually changed the pronunciation of some words. A good later example of the latter fact is the change in the pronunciation of *obliged*, which in Pope's day was a new importation from the French, in which language the vowel letter 'i' represents the sound of 'ee'. So long as it was a new foreign word, it was pronounced in the French way, 'oableejd,' though spelt *obliged*. At last, when it became a naturalized English word, the spelling caused it to be pronounced with the English long 'i' sound, and we so pronounce it today.

Sixteenth-century spelling was more phonetic than ours, because it more faithfully represented the then current pronunciation—leaving out of account the pedantic spellings introduced by Renaissance scholars, illustrated above. In Shakespeare, for example, we find such words as—*beefe*, *theefe*, *beleefe*, *greefe*, and *coffe* (for 'cough'); and in 'An Apologie for Poetrie', Sir Philip Sidney has—*hee*, *mee*, *shee*, *wil*, *skil*, *dooings*, *likenes*, *mooved*, *cullour*, *immediat*, *theyre*, *yeeres*, *dooth*, *leysure*, *meerly*, etc. In the next century, Milton has, in 'Lycidas', such spellings as—*watry*, *gon* (gone), *don* (done), *spreds*, *els* (else), *sed* (said), *freakt* (freaked), *slop'd*, *bin* (as 'been' was then pronounced). But the spelling was by no means fixed in those days, and writers pretty well pleased themselves how they spelt certain words; witness the different ways in which Shakespeare spelt his own name.

The printers had more to do with fixing English spelling than the writers; but it was Dr Samuel Johnson, in the eighteenth century, who finally settled it for most words, in his famous 'Dictionary', the first regular lexicon ever attempted for the English language. Dr Johnson had no

expert knowledge of the science of languages ; but he was such a great literary authority that his decisions were accepted as final for a long period. Unhappily, his chief principle was that spelling should represent etymology more than actual current pronunciation ; and he undoubtedly hindered the tendency that was establishing itself at that time to simplify spelling in the interests of the prevailing way of pronouncing words. ' In consequence, his authority exerted a distinct influence toward retaining many spellings which in his time were tending to go out of use.'<sup>1</sup>

Our present spelling probably represents fairly well the sixteenth century pronunciation of English, except for the useless mute letters brought in by pedantic scholars ; but it does not represent the pronunciation of the twentieth century, which is in many ways very different. It has lost the phonetic simplicity of English spelling in the early ages, and so has become a hindrance rather than a help to correct speaking of English. As Professor Max Müller said : ' English spelling is a national misfortune. It is unintelligible, unhistorical, and unteachable.'

It is this ' unholy muddle ' of English spelling that is the most formidable obstacle in the way of learning the language. And this refers not only to foreigners, but to the English people themselves ; for the English child, while it learns to speak its own tongue naturally, and so has no trouble with the pronunciation, has to be taught laboriously how to read it and write it. And some English grown-up people never really master the spelling of their own tongue, but in writing letters have to have recourse from time to time to the dictionary. It is said that even so highly cultured a man as the late Lord Balfour would at times look up from his writing-desk and ask, ' How do you spell . . . ? ' There is, unhappily, no magic formula, nor any fool-proof method, for learning how to spell correctly. (Certainly the famous ' practical ' method of Mr Squeers, of Dotheboys Hall, is not to be commended ! ' We go in for the practical

<sup>1</sup> T. R. Lounsbury, *The Standard of Pronunciation in English*.

mode of teaching, *Nickleby*,' he said ; ' the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to scour ; w-i-n-d-e-r, window, casement. When the boy knows this out of a book, he goes and does it. ' ) Some help, however, may be given to weak spellers, both foreign and English ; and it is mainly with that practical object in view that this little book has been written. It must, however, be clearly understood that no aids to correct spelling can be of any use to a student who expects all his difficulties to be solved without effort and hard work on his own part. There is no such thing as English ' spelling without tears '. But any weak speller, whether English or foreign, who will conscientiously and methodically work through this small book, may find in it an Ariadne's thread which, if he will hold on to it, may guide him through the labyrinth of English spelling.

As this book is meant, primarily, for members of the British Commonwealth who are not English by birth, as well as for the English weak speller, no attempt has been made to use phonetics or a phonetic alphabet, for the use of which special preparation would be necessary. But in the Appendix will be found an alphabet which is phonetic so far as is possible with the use of only the letters of the English alphabet, without the introduction of any new signs. It is based on the tentative alphabet suggested by the English Simplified Spelling Society, with a few alterations and additions. This has been made use of from time to time throughout the book to indicate more precisely the pronunciation of words. It is easy to learn, as it is consistent ; and, before beginning the study of the book, it would be well for the reader to consult it. The method followed in this book is a detailed consideration of signs and sounds, illustrated by numerous examples for oral practice. The first three chapters are devoted to a detailed examination of the vowel signs (letters and digraphs), and the various sounds they represent. In Chapter IV, the process is reversed,

and the vowel sounds are dealt with and the vowel signs by which each is represented. Chapter V deals with the consonants, especially with those that are more or less irregular in their use. Then follow two chapters (VI and VII), which go again over the ground from another angle, on words having the same sound though differently spelt, and words spelt in the same way but having different sounds. In Chapter VIII are given some rules for spelling, which may be helpful; though English spelling is so irregular that nearly all the so-called rules are vitiated by numerous exceptions. The method, no doubt, involves a good deal of repetition; but perhaps this is all to the good, for it is only by repetition that the great varieties of spelling can be mastered. It may also be thought that the words given as examples are unnecessarily numerous; but many have been given on purpose, partly to represent all possible shades of vowel sounds in connexion with different consonants, and partly to give plenty of scope for oral practice in pronunciation. Although a little outside the scope of the book, a chapter (Chapter IX) has been added on 'Stress and Pitch', or Intonation, for the help of readers whose native tongue is not English; for it is impossible to speak a foreign language naturally without catching the way in which the natives speak it—the intonation of their voices in speaking sentences and phrases. Finally, in the Appendix, a practical method of simplifying English spelling in accordance with actual English pronunciation is explained and worked out. This does not, of course, pretend to any authority nor finality, but is only a suggestion, and is given in illustration of the fact that, without the use of any new signs, which would entail great changes and expense in printing, it is possible to devise a system of spelling based on a consistent and rational principle, which would be very easy to learn, and which would accurately represent and so help to preserve the actual pronunciation of English words in Standard English Speech.

While this book has been written with a practical object, to help weak spellers, it illustrates incidentally, and so emphasizes, the crying need for spelling reform. It is high time that the simplification of English spelling on some rational principle should be seriously taken in hand. The present state of English spelling has been thus well summed up by Sir George Hunter, M.P.: 'Theoretically, it cannot be denied that our spelling is bad, because it is illogical, inconsistent and misleading. Practically, it is bad because it causes waste of time, increased cost of printing, is a cause of illiteracy, slovenly speech, variations and inaccuracies of pronunciation.'

There are strong arguments in favour of reform. One is educational. It has been calculated that our illogical spelling wastes at least a whole year of every English child's schooling. The Italian language has a sensible spelling system, and it is said that, in consequence, an Italian child takes a year less than an English child to learn the spelling, and so the reading, of its mother tongue. The English child has to waste time and effort over what is irrational and illogical. If our spelling were more phonetic, with one sign for one sound, and one sound only for each sign, spelling, and so reading, could be learnt in a few weeks. As it is, it is utterly confusing to the learner. The child is taught, for example, the sound of *foul*; but when he pronounces *soul* in the same way he is told to say 'soal'. Revising his idea of the sound of 'ou', he next calls *soup*, 'soap', but is taught to say 'soop'. So, coming across *touch* he naturally pronounces it 'tooch', and is puzzled to find he is wrong again and should say 'tuch'. He becomes still more bewildered to learn that *ought* must be pronounced 'aut', and *youth*, 'yeuth'; and so on, and so on, till he realizes there is no safe rule to guide him, and all is a mere question of luck whether he spells and pronounces right or not. In the end, learning to spell does not call for the use of the reasoning powers, but only for sheer memorizing. As to the argument that it is good exercise for the child

mind, you might as well say that the treadmill was good exercise for the body. Work and effort that is purposeless is worse than useless ; it is positively harmful. And it must be remembered that time taken up in the unnecessary task of learning an illogical system of spelling is time taken away from learning far more useful subjects.

A second cogent reason in favour of spelling reform is that our present ' bad ' spelling is a serious handicap to foreigners wishing to learn our language. In other respects English has a great advantage over many other languages. Its grammar is comparatively simple. There are no genders for nouns, so that an adjective takes the same form whether applied to male or female; and the conjugation of its verbs is simplicity itself as compared with some other tongues. So the learner has practically no grammar to study. Moreover, so far as Europe is concerned, English is a sort of amalgam of different languages. Of Teutonic stock, it has taken in a vast number of words from Latin, Greek and French ; and so is not difficult for a European to pick up. As it is, even with its spelling handicap, English is more widely spoken all over the world than any other language, not excepting French and Spanish. It is known and spoken by probably more than two hundred millions of the inhabitants of this earth. If its spelling were simplified on some rational principle, English would spread still more rapidly, till it might become a world language, and so a great unifying international influence. Lord Bryce stated towards the end of his long life his considered opinion that, ' if English spelling were simplified, it would in a generation become the language of commerce all over the world, with enormous benefit to British trade '. This is an important matter for our great British Commonwealth of nations, which contains as fellow-citizens along with those of British descent such large numbers of people of many different races and nationalities. In India alone, with its 350 millions, with their many different languages, English is the only tongue that is in any



way a *lingua franca*, in which educated Bengalis, Madrasis, Panjabis, Mahrattas, and the rest, can freely communicate with one another; and it would be used among them far more extensively if its spelling were simplified.

A third argument is that a sound and logical system of spelling, which really represented Standard English pronunciation, would tend to fix and preserve good English speech. The Principal of one of the English University Colleges publicly stated that English pronunciation was more slipshod and slovenly than that of any other language in Europe—or even in the world! Our irrational spelling is responsible for many mispronunciations of words, and encourages provincialisms and a careless manner of speaking, and it has itself actually led to what may be called ‘spelling pronunciations’, or changes in the correct sound of words to fit in with incorrect spellings. A sound spelling system would check the vulgarization and deterioration of the language. ‘If the spelling were phonetic, it would be the most powerful influence in spreading standard speech, in these days of compulsory education.’ (W. Ripman.)

The objections put forward against spelling reform are not very impressive. The feeblest is that the new spelling would look ‘ugly’. What is meant is that it would at first look strange. But there is nothing particularly ‘beautiful’ about our present muddled spelling. We have simply got used to it, and do not notice its uglinesses and absurdities. And we should soon get used to the new. And there is a certain beauty in efficiency, as there is in a machine that does perfectly the job for which it was made.

The objection that in a simplified spelling we should lose the history of the language seems, at first sight, to be of more weight. But the statements of acknowledged experts on the subject ought to be sufficient to put it out of court. Professor W. W. Skeat said: ‘In the interests of etymology we ought to spell as we pronounce’; and, in his *Principles of English Etymology*, he bursts out wrathfully, saying: ‘It is surely a national disgrace to us, to find that the

wildest arguments concerning English spelling and etymology are constantly being used even by well-educated persons, whose ignorance of early English pronunciation and of modern English phonetics is so complete, that they have no suspicion whatever of the amazing worthlessness of their ludicrous discoveries.' And Sir James A. H. Murray, of *Oxford Dictionary* fame, said in 1888: 'I need hardly add that my Dictionary experience has already shown me that the ordinary appeals to Etymology against spelling reform utterly break down upon examination. The etymological information supposed to be enshrined in the current spelling is sapped at its very foundation by the fact that it is, in sober fact, oftener wrong than right, that it is oftener the fancies of pedants or sciolists of the Renaissance, or monkish etymologers of still earlier times, that are thus preserved, than the truth which alone is Etymology.' As a matter of fact, our English spelling conceals and misleads, as often as it reveals, the history of our words. For example: a 'witch-elm' has nothing to do with 'witches'; a 'slow-worm' is not so called from its slowness of motion, nor a 'greyhound' from its colour; 'belfry' does not come from 'bell', but from the Old English 'berfrey', a watch-tower; 'Jerusalem' artichokes never had anything to do with Jerusalem—the name being a corruption of the Italian *girasole* (sunflower); 'lutestring' has no reference either to 'lute' or 'string', but is a corruption of 'lustring', shining silk; 'sovereign' has nothing to do with 'reign', and should be spelt 'soveran'; there is no derivative connexion between 'pen' and 'pencil', 'sorry' and 'sorrow', or 'vile' and 'villain'; 'cutlet' does not come from 'cut', nor does 'curtail' from 'tail', nor has 'crayfish' anything to do with 'fish'. These are all popular, and mistaken, etymologies; for when folk do not know the origin of a word, they twist it into something familiar to them, as with Jerusalem artichoke above, and as with 'Birdcage Walk' in London, which was not a street of bird-sellers, but the

'bocage' or 'shady' walk. As has been well said, the argument that historical spelling is better than phonetic spelling amounts to this—'that it is better to write our words as we imagine that somebody else pronounced them a long time since, than as we pronounce them ourselves'.<sup>1</sup>

Other arguments against spelling reform are dealt with in the Appendix, but the only serious 'argument' is inertia and sentiment—the innate conservatism of the English people, who dislike change until it is forced upon them. In the meantime, the movement for reform is growing, and is supported by a large number of educational authorities in England, in the Universities and great public schools.

To introduce a strictly phonetic system of spelling would not be within the range of practical politics, for reasons given in the Appendix; but several sound schemes for rational and consistent spelling, not involving any change in the existing alphabet, have been put forward, any one of which would be a vast improvement on the present 'no system'. Some argue that the change could be gradual. As H. W. Fowler puts it, in his *Modern English Usage*, 'English had better be treated in the English way, and its spelling not revolutionized, but amended in detail, here a little and there a little, as absurdities become intolerable, till a result is obtained that shall neither be a burden to schoolboys, nor stultify the intelligence nor outrage the scholar'. As far back as 1880, Dr A. H. Murray suggested a practical way of beginning, in a letter to a member of the English Spelling Reform Association:—

'As to practical measures, I strongly approve of gradual steps. If Spelling Reformers will agree on a list of immediate changes, and pléde themselves to use them whenever they can, I will join them in doing so. If some hundreds of men will do this, it cannot be laughed down. . . . The new must, I believe, be grafted on the old.'

<sup>1</sup> W. D. Whitney, *Language and the Study of Language*.

This sounds well, and the opinion of such authorities must be given due weight ; but it is very doubtful if a gradual process of spelling reform would be expedient, or even workable. I believe attempts at piecemeal reform have been made in America, but with little result. I venture to quote some words on this subject from a letter I received from Sir George B. Hunter, the Chairman of the English Simplified Spelling Society : ' I am sure our spelling if it is to be improved, should be improved in one step, and not gradually and a little bit at a time. That would require generations of time, and the results in the end would not be complete or satisfactory. Such a method, if it were possible, would, I am sure, combine the maximum of inconvenience with a minimum of improvement, like the shortening of a dog's tail by cutting off an inch at a time. I cannot see any reason to favour such a method instead of considering and adopting the necessary improvements at one time. I do not aim at compulsory changes, but a recommendation of the adoption of simple fonetic spelling ; and giving the option of adopting it—with, I hope, the example of using it in official publications. Such a minor inconvenience as would be caused would occur only once instead of many times and over a long period.'

In the meantime we have to do the best we can with the present unsatisfactory system ; and it is hoped that this small book may be of some service to such as are still struggling with the anomalies of English spelling. So slowly do things move, that it will be a long time yet before the book is out of date.

## KEY TO THE PRONUNCIATION

No strictly phonetic signs (except 'ə' for the neutral vowels) are used in this book ; but the transliterations in the text (within inverted commas and brackets), indicating the pronunciation of words, are in the simplified spelling fully explained in the Appendix (p. 203), with these additional signs—'ə', and 'hw'. For the reader's convenience, a summary of it is given here.

### Consonants :—

These have their usual values : **b** ; **d** ; **f** ; **h** ; **j** ; **k** ; **l** ; **m** ; **n** ; **p** ; **r** ; **t** ; **v** ; **w** ; **y** ; **z** ; **sh** ; **ng** (as in *ring*) ; **nk** (as in *rink*).

These have one sound only : **g** (hard only—*got, bog*) ; **s** (hard only—*sun, boss*) ; **ch** (as in *church* only) , **th** (hard only—*thick, broth*).

### New symbols :

**zh** (soft ' sh '—as in *measure, fusion*) ;

**dh** (soft ' th '—as in *this, breathe*) ;

**ngg** (as in *linger, hunger*) ;

**hw** (as in ' hwot ', ' hwedhər ', for *what, whether*).

These letters are not used : **c** ; **q** ; **x** ; **gh** ; **rh** ; **ph**.

**k** or **s** takes the place of **c** (e.g. *serkl*, for ' circle ') ,

**ks** or **gz** takes the place of **x** (e.g. *ekspert* for ' expert ' ; *cgzamin* for ' examine ') ;

**kw** takes the place of **qu** (e.g. *konkwest*, for ' conquest ').

## Vowel Signs :—

- a as in *fat, ran, lax* (Short 'a').
- aa „ *kraal, bazaar* (Broad 'a'); *rather, bath, Ah!*
- au „ *fraud, haul, taut, law, ought, all, for.*
- ai „ *pail, main* (Long 'a'), *fame, patent, lay, grey, vein.*
- ae(r) „ *aeronaut* (Long 'a' with '-r'); *pair, rare, mayor.*
- e „ *met, hen, peck* (Short 'e'); *meant, said, says.*
- ee „ *meet, seen, feed* (Long 'e'), *seat, be, seize, machine.*
- i „ *hit, fin, kick* (Short 'i'); *myth, busy, build.*
- ei „ *seismic, eider* (Long 'i'); *shine, pilot, sigh, height.*
- o „ *hot, fox, on* (Short 'o'); *what, swan.*
- oa „ *boat, loan* (Long 'o'); *holy, bold, soul, flow, doe.*
- u „ *but, run, fuss* (Short 'u'); *son, rough, does, mother.*
- eu „ *feud, neuter* (Long 'u'); *tune, new, pure, view.*
- oo „ *fool, mood, noon* (Long 'oo'); *blue, flew, fruit.*
- ū „ *bull, full* (Short 'oo'); *good, soot, wolf, could.*
- ou „ *foul, cloud; cow, doubt, plough.*
- oi „ *coin, noise; toy, royal.*
- er „ *fern, herd* (Long neutral); *fur, fir, myrrh, heard, word.*
- err „ *merry, ferried*; (Short 'e' with '-r'); *bury, very.*
- ə (Short neutral) as in—*soda, wither, sailor, travel, idol, woman, about, before, surface, famous, element, etc.*

There need be no confusion between 'er', long neutral, and 'ər', short neutral (as in *withēr*, 'widhər'); for 'er' is *never* found in unstressed, and 'ər' is *never* found in stressed, syllables.

(Apart from 'err' and 'ngg', no double consonants are used.)

Note: The only differences between this alphabet and the one in the Appendix are these: in the Appendix, (a) the signs 'hw' and 'ə', are not used; (b) a single 'a' (not 'aa') is used for the broad 'a' sound before '-r' (so, 'bar', not 'baar'); (c) a single 'e' (not 'ee') is used for the long 'e' sound before another vowel (as in, 'reorganize', 'deist'), and in the following monosyllables—*he, me, we, she, ye, be, the*; (d) a single 'o' (not 'oa') for long 'o' before a vowel ('coerce'), and in *o, no, so, go*. The alphabet in the Appendix was devised for practical purposes, namely as a simplified spelling alphabet that could be adopted without difficulty for ordinary use. It had, therefore, to be something of a compromise, and does not profess to be strictly phonetic.



## CHAPTER I

# VOWELS AND VOWEL SOUNDS

### I. VOWELS

THE word 'vowel' comes from the Latin for 'voice': and a vowel is a 'voice letter', or 'sound letter'. The other letters of the alphabet, called 'consonants', have no sounds of their own; they produce sounds only when combined with 'sound' letters, or vowels. Hence their name, 'consonant', which means, literally, 'sounding with'. For example, the consonants 'p' and 't' have no sounds of their own; so 'pt' has no sound. But if a vowel, say 'a' or 'o', is placed between them, the different sounds of *pat*, *pot*, are produced. It is the vowels in these words that give the sounds; the consonants are 'sounded with' them to produce the words.

In English there are five vowels—'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'. To these may be added 'y', which, though a consonant, is used in a number of words as a vowel; but, as it always has the same sound as the vowel 'i' (as in *cry*, *myth*), it does not increase the number of vowels. The consonant 'w', too, though never used by itself as a vowel, is a vowel in the diphthongs 'ow', 'ew' and 'aw', in which it takes the place of the vowel 'u'. Hence the consonants 'y' and 'w' are sometimes called 'semi-vowels'.

In addition to the vowels proper, or simple vowels, there are other vowel sounds called 'diphthongs'. A diphthong is a compound vowel sound, produced by sounding two simple vowel sounds together. (Hence the name, which literally means 'two sounds', or 'twice sounded'.) For example, if the simple vowel sounds of 'a' in *father* and of 'u' in *blue* be sounded rapidly in succession ('aa-oo'),



the result will be a compound sound, or diphthong, represented by 'ou' in *cloud*, or by 'ow' in *crowd*; a sound which is neither 'aa' nor 'oo', but a third sound made up of both. In English there are these four diphthongs: 'ou' ('ow'); 'oi' ('oy'); long 'i'; and long 'u'. As we shall see in the next chapter, such apparent diphthongs as 'ea', 'ie', 'ei', 'ai', etc., are not really diphthongs at all.

We must distinguish carefully between vowel sounds and vowel signs, or letters. In speaking, we make certain sounds with our voices in pronouncing words, and we agree that in writing and reading those sounds are represented to the eye by certain signs, called letters. The vowel letters are not the vowel sounds; they are simply agreed-upon signs of the sounds. For example, letter 'o' is simply an arbitrary sign which we agree shall represent a certain vowel sound; it is not itself the vowel sound. In a perfect language, there would be only one sign (letter) for each vowel sound, and that sign would never represent any other sound. In other words, there would be one sound, one letter; one letter, one sound. Spelling based upon that principle would be 'phonetic' ('sound') spelling, in which the spelling of every word would accurately represent its pronunciation. But no language is perfect in that respect, though some, like Italian and Spanish, are better than others. Perhaps one of the most imperfect is the English language, the spelling of which is very far from corresponding with the pronunciation of its words.

One of the chief difficulties a foreigner has to contend with in learning English, lies just here; he can never be sure that a certain letter will always stand for the same sound, nor that the same sound will always be represented by the same letter. The reason for this is, not only that we have only five vowel letters to represent about twenty vowel sounds, but that there is in our spelling a lot of unnecessary and confusing duplication in the use of the

few signs we have. For example, the letter 'a' has in English as many as six different sounds, which can be heard in the following words: *fat, fate, fare, father, fall, and what*. So poor 'a' is sadly overworked, having to look after six jobs instead of only one. On the other hand, most of the vowel sounds are, quite unnecessarily, represented by several vowel letters each; in spite of the fact that there are not enough vowel letters to go round. The one long 'a' sound ('ai'), for instance, is represented by no less than six vowel letters and combinations of letters, namely: 'a' (*lazy*); 'ai' (*faint*), 'ay' (*clay*); 'ei' (*veil*); 'ey' (*grey*); 'ea' (*great*); not to speak of such odd spellings as *campaign, champagne, straight, reign, weigh, gaol, gauge, halfpenny* (pronounced *haipni*). This one 'ai' sound is a greedy fellow who, not content with one servant, forces six and more to do his bidding. Or what is the foreigner or, for that matter, the English schoolchild, to make of this string of words, all differently spelt, and yet all having exactly the same vowel sound?—*Fire, liar, crier, tyre, choir, higher, buyer; die, by, rye, eye, high, ay; vile, isle, aisle; site, might, height, indict; thine, sign*.

It is mainly this lack of any rational system that makes English spelling so difficult to master. If each vowel letter stood for only one, and always the same, sound; and if each vowel sound were always represented by one, and always the same, letter, how easy spelling would be! Once the letters, and their corresponding sounds, had been learnt, there could be no mistake in the spelling of words; and learning to read would be an easy and quick process. But as it stands, spelling becomes largely a matter of sheer memory, and the special spelling of thousands of words has to be learnt off by heart; for most of the so-called rules for spelling are weakened by numerous exceptions, which have also to be learnt and remembered.

Before we begin to consider the vowels and diphthongs in detail, it will be well to point out another difficulty in learning English spelling and pronunciation; and that is

the fact that three of our vowel letters are pronounced quite differently in most (if not all) other languages. In French, Italian, German, Spanish, and other European languages that use the Roman script, 'a' is sounded as 'aa' (broad 'a'), and never as 'ai'; 'e' is sounded as 'ai', and never as 'ee'; and 'i' is sounded as 'ee' (long 'e'), and never as the diphthong 'ei' (as in the German *Kaiser*). This pronunciation is so universal that it is hard to understand how the English sounds of 'ai' for 'a', 'ee' for 'e', and 'ei' for 'i', arose. But there it is, and we have to make the best of it. The pure vowel sounds in other languages are 'aa', 'ai', 'ee', 'oa', 'oo'; and these are represented in those languages by the letters 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'.

Another point to be noted is that the sounds of our English long 'i' and long 'u' are not simple vowel sounds, but compound sounds or diphthongs; for 'i' in *mine* is really the sound of the German diphthong 'ai', and 'u' in such words as *duke*, *tune*, is really two sounds, 'ee' and 'oo' combined—'dee-ook', 'tee-oon'. (See Chapter II.)

## II. THE VOWEL SOUNDS

Before we consider the vowel letters and the various sounds they represent, it will be well to make an attempt to describe the vowel sounds themselves, and how they are produced. This can be done really satisfactorily only by oral teaching; and, without using a phonetic alphabet, it is very difficult to do it at all well in print. However, the attempt may be worth making.

The vowel sounds in English may be arranged in pairs of short and long vowels; but the pairs will not be always those we should expect from the vowel letters that represent these sounds. For example, the long 'e' sound in *feed* is not the long sound of short 'e' in *fed*; the long 'i' sound in *bite* is not the long sound of short 'i' in *bit*,

though the same symbol is used. As a matter of fact, long 'e' ('ee') is the long sound of short 'i'; for example, *bin* (short), *been* (long). (Indeed, *bin* is the way in which *been* was once actually pronounced in England.) And long 'a' (as in *fade*) is really the long sound of short 'e'; for example, *let* (short), when lengthened becomes *late* (long). In the same way, 'au' in *fraud* is the long sound of short 'o'; for example, *tot* (short), *taut* (long). So it will be convenient to arrange the vowel sounds in sound-pairs—short and long.

As we shall learn in Chapter V, consonant sounds are produced by a temporary stoppage of the breath in passing through the mouth. For example, say aloud 'coo', and then say 'coop'. You will notice that in saying 'coop', the vowel sound of 'coo' is suddenly checked by the closed lips, and then released in a little explosion—the consonant 'p' sound. But in producing pure vowel sounds, the passage through the mouth is kept wide enough open for the breath to pass out freely, without any interruption from tongue, lips or teeth. So all that is heard is the sounds produced by the vocal chords. As the breath passes through the mouth, however, the sounds produced by the vocal chords are modified, or, so to speak, shaped, by movements of the tongue, lips, palate, and general shape of the mouth. For example, say aloud 'oo' (as in *fool*), and your lips will form themselves into a round 'o'.

The pairs of related vowel sounds, short and long, are :—*fatter, father*; *ferry, fairy*; *fed, fade*; *fit, feet*; *tot, taut*; *hero, heroic*; *cup, coop*; *offer, aver* ('ə', 'er'). All these are simple vowel sounds; the diphthong sounds will be dealt with in the next chapter.

These sounds may be divided, according to the way in which they are produced, into Front Vowels and Back Vowels. The front vowels, so called because the front-parts of the mouth have something to do with their formation, are: broad 'a', short 'a'; short 'e', long 'a'; short 'i', long 'e'. The back vowels, so

called because movements of the back of the tongue have to do with their formation, are: short 'o', and 'au'; unstressed 'o' and long 'o'; short 'u' and 'oo'; and short neutral ('ə') and long neutral ('-er') sounds.

#### (A) FRONT VOWEL SOUNDS

- (1) **Short 'a' sound, and broad 'a' sound.** Say these words aloud: *carry, car; fatter, father; Cam, calm.* The first word of each pair has short 'a'; the second, broad 'a'.

In the formation of both sounds, the mouth is well open, the lips unmoved, and the tongue almost flat in the mouth; but when short 'a' is said, the tongue moves forward and is a little higher in front and a little lower at the back.

- (2) **Short 'e' sound, and long 'a' sound with '-r' (as in *fare*.** See Section 3 on p. 9). Say these words aloud: *ferry, fairy; merry, Mary.* The first word of each pair has the short 'e' sound; the second, long 'a' with '-r'.

In forming the long 'a' sound with '-r' (as in *care, fair, bear*), the tongue is raised a little higher than for short 'a', and the mouth is a little less open. In saying the short 'e' sound, the tongue is still more raised.

- (3) **Short 'e' sound, and long 'a' sound.** Say these words aloud: *fed, fade; met, mate; west, waist.* The first word of each pair has the short 'e' sound, and the second, long 'a' sound.

In the formation of long 'a' sound, the lower jaw is lowered.

- (4) **Short 'i' sound, and long 'e' sound.** Say these words aloud: *fit, feet; bin, been; mill, meal.* The first word of each pair has short 'i' sound, and the second long 'e' ('ee') sound.

In 'ee' the back of the tongue rises a little as compared with short 'e', and the muscles are tense.

## (B) THE BACK VOWEL SOUNDS

These are the 'o' and 'oo' and 'au' sounds. They are modified by slight movements of the back of the tongue, and the bottom jaw is lowered. All the back vowels gain by the rounding of the lips, especially long 'o' and 'oo'.

- (1) **Short 'o' sound and the 'au' sound.** Say these words aloud: *tot, taut; on, awn; pod, fraud*. The first word of each pair has the short 'o' sound; the second, the sound of 'au' or 'aw'.

In forming the 'au' sound, the lips are not quite so wide open as in the short 'o' sound; in the short 'o' sound the tongue is lower than for the long 'o' sound and the 'au' sound.

- (2) **The obscure 'o' sound in unstressed syllables (*hero*), and the long 'o' sound.** Say these words aloud: *hero, heroic; dynamo, mole*. (For the neutral sounds in unstressed syllables, see Chapter III.) The 'o' in *hero* has not the full 'o' sound, but a much slighter sound. It is the 'o' sound of which long 'o' is the lengthened form.

In saying long 'o', the mouth is widened by the fall of the lower jaw, and the lips are rounded, but not so narrowly as with the 'oo' sound.

- (3) **The short 'u' sound, and long 'oo' sound.** Say these words aloud: *cup, coop; glum, gloom; mud, mood*. The first word of each pair has the short 'u' sound; the second, the long 'oo' sound.

In forming the short 'u' sound, the tongue is raised half-way at the back, the lips neutral, the muscles tense. In 'oo', the tongue is lowered, and, to get the full sound, the lips must be rounded into a narrow 'o' shape.

For the 'oo' sounds, see Section (G), p. 21. There are two: short 'oo', heard in *good, foot, hood, book*; and long, as in *room, woo, food, moon*, etc. ('gūd', etc.: 'room', etc.)

- (4) The short neutral vowel, and the long neutral vowel. Say these words aloud: *differ*, *defér*; *bitter*, *deîér*. The first '-er' in each pair is an unstressed syllable, and its sound is the short neutral vowel ('ər'); the second syllable in each is stressed, and its sound is the long neutral vowel ('er'). (See Note 2 on p. 14, and Chapter III, for the neutral vowels.)

The above are the simple vowel sounds. For the signs for them used in this book, see the key given at the beginning of this chapter, and the full explanation of it in the Appendix.

### III. THE SOUNDS OF THE VOWEL LETTERS

The following tables of vowel letters, with the various vowel sounds they represent in English, should be carefully studied. The words given as examples should be repeated aloud, until the exact sounds are caught and become familiar. Oral practice is very necessary for learning correct pronunciation.

#### (A) THE LETTER 'A'

Say these four words aloud, and try to hear their different sounds: *fat*, *fate*, *fare*, *far* ('fat', 'fait', 'faer', 'faar'). The first (*fat*) has the short 'a' sound; the second (*fate*), the long 'a' sound; the third (*fare*), the long 'a' sound modified by '-r'; and the fourth (*far*), what may be called the broad 'a' sound. These are the principal sounds represented by the vowel letter 'a'; the other sounds given below are irregular, and confined to certain words; but they must be reckoned with.

#### Examples:

- (1) short 'a' ('a'): as in *crab*, *back*, *had*, *rag*, *badge*, *shall*, *ram*, *can*, *tap*, *carry*, *rat*, *cavil*, *axe*, *dazzle*, *catch*, *slang*, *bank*, *savage*, *fact*, *pant*, *apse*, *camp*,

*cattle, bagged, dagger, tapped, ragged, sapper, passive, batting, harrow, parry, marriage, addled, raffle, ladder, embarrass, harried, mangle, avid, passenger, ambassador, ranker, rabid, valley, shallow, imagine, balance.*

- (2) long 'a' ('ai'): as in *baby, labour, ladle, wading, pagan, page, taken, naked, chamber, danger, capable, vapour, nasal, patriot, saviour, maze, radiant, adjacent, vagrant, patient, gracious, scaly, pastry, lazy, babe, face, wade, safe, rage, take, male, name, bane, cape, chase, fate, save, crazy, ache, waste, taste, range, arrange, engage, bathe.*
- (3) long 'a' with '-re' ('-aer'): as in *bare, blare, care, chary, dare, daring, fare, glared, mare, pare, pared, preparing, stare, snare, spared, tares, aware, wary, parent, farewell, vary, rare, scarce, various, compared, share, careless, Mary, square, hare.*
- (4) broad 'a' ('aa'): as in *father ('faadhər'), rather, path ('paath'), bath, ah!, ha!, drama, command ('-aand'), demand, remand, balm ('baam'), calm, palm, psalm, embalm, can't ('kaant'), vase ('vaaz'), Rajah, plaque ('plaak'), promenade ('-aad'), charade ('shəraad'), garage, mirage ('-aazh'), morale ('-aal'), moustache, tomato, cantāta, sonāta, spa ('spaa'), kraal, bazaar, bar, barn, lard, larder, large, barge, margin, marge, marl, bark, market, stark, harm, tarn, harp, carping, car, parse, parsley, sparse, start, startle, tart, smart, chart, parting, carve, larva, garth, marching, parched, starch, larch, farther, marshal, embargo.*

The following sounds of 'a' are exceptional, and confined to certain words:—

- (5) 'a' with the sound of short 'o': as in *swab ('swob'), wad, waddle, wadding, swaddle, wan, swan, wand,*



*wander, want, wanton, swamp, wallow, swallow, was, wash, wasp, what, watch, wattle, sweat, warrant, warrior, quad* ('kwod'), *quadrant, quadrangle, quadroom, quadruped, squadron, squad, squabble, squalid, qualify, quality, quantity, quandary, squander, quarry, quarrel, squash, quash, quassia, squat, squatter, yacht.*

(Note how many of these words begin with 'w' or 'qu' (which is really 'kw'); as though the 'w' sound had the effect of changing the 'a' sound into the 'o' sound. Compare its effect on the 'o' sound in such words as *worry, work*, etc. See p. 18 (E) (4).) (Note the curious spelling, *yacht*, pronounced 'yot'.)

(6) 'a' with the sound of 'au' ('aw'):

(a) as in *all* ('aul'), *ball, call, fall, fallen, falling, gall, hall, pall, small, stall, tall, wall, appalling, appal, walnut, walrus, bald, scald, also, almost, balked, chalk, stalk, talk, walk, walking, walker, water, wrath, waltz, halt, halter, malt, salt, altar, alter, palter, paltry, false, palsy, psalter, psaltery.*

(Note that in all these words, except *water* and *wrath*, the 'a' is followed by the consonant 'l'.)

(b) as in *war* ('waur'), *ward, warden, warder, warp, warble, warlock, warm, warn, wart, wharf, dwarf, sward, swarthy, swart, quart, quarter, quartz.*

(Note how in these words the '-r' changes the sound of 'a' into that of 'au', as it changes the sound of 'o' into 'au' in such words as *for, or, sore, more* ('maur'), etc. See under the vowel 'o', p. 18 (E) (3).)

Notes:

1. In two words 'a' has the sound of short 'e': viz. *any, many*, pronounced 'eni', 'meni'. So in *anything, anyone, anybody*. But 'manifold' has the regular short 'a' sound.

2. Notice the difference between the long 'a' sound (No. 2 above) and the sound of long 'a' followed by '-re' (No. 3 above) ('aer'). In No. 3 sound, the 'a' is always followed by '-r'; in No. 2 sound it never is. Say these pairs of words aloud, and listen for the difference in sound: *male, mare*; *fate, fare*; *space, spare*; *wane, ware*; *came, care*. The long 'a' sound is also represented by 'ai' (as in *pail*), and by 'ay' (as in *pay*); and both these before 'r' have exactly the same sound as long 'a' before '-re'; compare *pare, pair, prayer*. The consonant 'r' seems to have a modifying effect on preceding vowels, and we shall find other examples of this with other vowels.

To hear the difference in sound between long 'a', short 'a', and broad 'a' before '-r', say these words aloud: *carry* (short 'a'); *care* (long 'a'); *car* (broad 'a'); *marry, mare, mar*; *charity, chary, starry*; *parried, pared, pard*; *carried, cared, card*.

The sound of long 'a' followed by '-re' ('aer') is represented by these different spellings: *pare, pair, prayer, pear, heir, there, mayor, e'er, Ayr, aeronaut*.

3. There are some words spelt with the letter 'a' about the pronunciation of which even educated English people differ, some preferring the broad 'a' sound ('aa'), some the short 'a' ('a'). Such words are *last, past*; *mass, grass, class*; *laugh, draught*; *grant*; *path, bath, lath*; *answer*; *command, demand*, etc. The difference is partly individual, and partly a matter of district; for in southern English the broad 'a' ('aa') is preferred, and the short 'a' ('a') in northern English. For example, some say 'paast', 'graas', 'laaf', 'graant', 'paath', 'aansær', 'komaand', etc. Others, equally well educated, pronounce these words with the short 'a' ('a'). Still others, again, are not consistent; they will say 'baath', 'paath'; 'komaand', but 'laf' (*laugh*), 'draft' (*draught*), 'gras', 'past', 'anser', etc. The *Oxford Dictionary* gives both pronunciations for *laugh*—'laf' and 'laaf'; and the

following words can, admittedly, be pronounced either way : *catholic* ('kath-' or 'kaath-'), *askance*, *elastic*, *enhance*, *exasperate*, *jasper*, *lather*, *masculine*, *mastiff*, *ranch* ('ransh' or 'raansh'), *telegraph*. As a rule, these have the broad 'a' sound ('aa') : *command* (*demand*, *remand*), *drama*, *bath*, *path*, *tomato*, *tornado*, *bravado*, *sonata*. (But *potato* ('potaito'); and either 'armaida' or 'armaada' (*armada*).) As to the other words first given, it cannot be said that either pronunciation (with 'a' or 'aa') is exclusively right, and neither can be called wrong. For practical purposes, all that is needed to know is that both pronunciations exist in the speech of educated English people.

#### (B) THE LETTER 'E'

Say these words aloud : *them*, *theme* ; *met*, *mete* ; *step*, *steep* ; *fetch*, *leech* ; *fed*, *feed* ; *fell*, *feel*.

The vowel sound in the first word of each pair is short 'e'; that in the second is long 'e'. Listen for the difference.

Examples :

- (1) short 'e' ('e') : as in *web*, *ebbed*, *fetch*, *fed*, *left*, *egg*, *edge*, *neck*, *fell*, *délegate*, *hem*, *emblem*, *pen*, *penny*, *sent*, *lend*, *wrench*, *leper*, *pepper*, *mess*, *lest*, *lesson*, *messenger*, *wet*, *netted*, *sets*, *never*, *brevity*, *vex*, *text*, *fez*, *réverent*, *length*, *strength*, *ethical*, *mesh*, *freshly*, *merry*, *ferry*, *cherry*, *very*, *berried*, *herring*, *errand*, *terrier*, *herald*, *verity*, *verify*, *merit*, *terrify*, *terror*, *cleric*.

(*Her*, *err*, *infer*, *inter*, *aver*, *herb*, *stern*, *herd*, *merge*, *serf*, *verse*, *inert*, *nervz*, *service*, *person*, *clergy*, *perjury*, *verb*, *inverted*, *asserted*, *converted*, *deserted*, *immersed*, *verge*—see Note 2, below.)

- (2) long 'e' ('ee') : as in *we*, *he*, *she*, *be*, *me*, *being*, *demon*, *glebe*, *ye*, *intercéde*, *scene*, *eke*, *venal*, *penal*, *serène*, *regal*,

*legal, mete, complete, deléte, recede, impede, dene, re-open, re-organize, eve, evening, these, here, mere, sere, severe, sphere, hero, zero, interfere.*

With double 'e' ('ee'): as in *bee, see, tee, flee, lee, knee, wee, deed, week, feel, steel, kneel, tree, seem, team, been, seen, green, keep, steep, creep, sheep, weep, freeze, breeze, lees, sees, trees, flees, feet, greet, meet, reef, beef, beech, leech, beer, cheer, deer, jeer, leer, peer, seer, beery, cheering, steerer, veering.*

(You can never make a mistake in the pronunciation of words spelt with 'ee', for 'ee' has always the long 'e' sound.)

- (3) **mute 'e'.** In many words the letter 'e' is mute (silent). For instance, the final 'e' is mute in such words as *tale, mate, fade, rage, scene, sere, mete, recede, nice, vile, side, surmise, finite, vote, rose, hole, tune, duke, lute, breathe, urge, piece, convince*, etc. It is also mute in the ending ('-ed') of verbal past tenses and participles, except after '-d' and '-t': e.g. *robed* ('roabd'), *robbed, roped, killed, called, massed, kicked, aimed, lugged, kissed, boxed, toyed, oiled, lined, moved*, etc.; but *mindéd* ('meind-əd'), *fadéd, beddéd, addéd, postéd, treatéd, matéd, slightéd*, etc. (But *nakéd* is an exception; compare *ached, baked, liked*, etc.) This final '-ed' was formerly always pronounced in all cases, and words like *called, obliged, feared*, etc., were pronounced *call-ed, oblig-ed, fear-ed*, etc. And some participles when used as adjectives are still so pronounced: e.g. *bless-ed, rugg-ed, ragg-ed, curs-ed, belov-ed*. We say 'He blessed *mə*', but 'It was a *bless-ed* time'; 'He deeply loved his *belov-ed*'; 'I *learned* Greek from a *learn-ed* scholar'.

(For the useful purposes that mute 'e' sometimes serves, see Chapter VIII, 1.)

## Notes:

1. Indian students sometimes seem to find a difficulty in catching the exact sound of our short 'a' (perhaps because it does not occur in Urdu), confusing it with that of short 'e'. (They will sometimes, for example, write, and say, 'merriage' for 'marriage', and spell 'Elexander' and 'Alizabeth'.) Yet the two sounds are quite distinct. Short 'a' is a flat sound; short 'e' is sharper. Say these pairs of words aloud, till you can catch the difference between the two sounds: *man, men; ham, hem; mat, met; mass, mess; back, beck; bag, beg; rap, rep; rant, rent; badge, hedge; catch, ketch; land, lend; shall, shell; bad, bed; marry, merry; parable, terrible; passenger, messenger.*

2. The sounds of '-er'. Note the difference between the sound of words like *very, merry, errand, herald, merit* (under short 'e' above), and that of the words in brackets, like *her, err, inverted*, etc. Say aloud *errand* and *erred*, *very* and *her*; and you should hear the difference. The sound of *very* is like a thin, slight echo of that of *vary*; but that of *her, erred*, is a thicker, more throaty sound. The first is the true sound of short 'e', which you can hear also in *terror, verity, cleric, herring, cherry*; the second has been called the 'long neutral' vowel sound. It is not confined to the letter 'e', but, as we shall see, is common to all the vowels (except 'a') with the consonant '-r'; e.g. all these words, though differently spelt, have exactly the same vowel sound: *infer, fir, fur, myrrh; herd, heard, third, fyrd, absurd, word.* (See Chapter III, v, p. 54.)

In fact '-er' has three sounds:—

- (a) short 'e': as in *very, ferry, terrier, berry.*
- (b) long neutral: as in *her, err, erring, stern, person.*
- (c) short neutral: as in *wither, painter, néver, inference.*

(The short neutral sounds will be explained in Chapter III. They can always be distinguished from the long neutral sound by the fact that they always occur in unstressed syllables, while the long neutral sound never does.)

3. Note that these three words, *there*, *where*, *ere*, are not pronounced with the long 'e' sound, like *here*, *severe*, *sere*, *mere*, rhyming with *peer*, *seer*, *cheer*. But they have the long 'a' sound, and rhyme with *tare*, *air* (so : 'thaer', 'hwaer', 'aer').

So 'ere' has two sounds :—

- (a) long 'e' ('eer') : e.g. *sphere*, *here*, *interfere* (like *peer*).
- (b) long 'a' ('aer') : e.g. *there*, *where*, *ere* (like *air*, *aware*).

4. Words beginning with 're-'. In such words, if 're-' is an unaccented syllable, it is short (or rather neutral) in sound : e.g. *regret*, *refuse*, *renew*, *reliant*, *rebut*, *return*, *rély*, etc. ('rəgret', 'rəfeuz', etc.)

But in some words it is sounded as long 'e' ('ee') : viz.

- (a) When it is accented : as in *réflex*, *régress*, *réscript*, *rétail* (adj.). ('reefleks', etc.)
- (b) Before vowels and 'h', even when it is unaccented : as in *reorganize*, *reassért*, *reaffirm*, *réagent*, *reinforce*, *reunion*, *rehóuse* (verb) ('reehouz', etc.) ; (but not in *rehéarse*).

Sometimes such words are spelt with a hyphen, to make the long pronunciation of the 're-' sure : e.g. *re-organize*, *re-inforce*, *re-affirm*, *re-iterate*, *re-armament*.

- (c) A hyphen is often put after the 're-' (which is pronounced long, 'ree-'), when a modern compound is to be distinguished from a better-known and differently pronounced old word : e.g. *re-cover*, to put on a new cover, as compared with *recover*, to get back, or get well again ; *re-count*, to count again, and *recount*, to relate.

#### (c) THE LETTER 'i'

Say these words aloud : *hid*, *hide* ; *lick*, *like* ; *mill*, *mile* ; *twin*, *twine* ; *midge*, *oblige*.

The vowel sound in the first word of each pair is short 'i', and that in the second is long 'i'.

Examples :

- (1) short 'i' ('i') : as in *bib, did, rich, if, gig, midge, bruck, ill, him, fin, ship, miss, is, hit, fix, fizz, wish, wither, watch, sing, linger, stinging, brink, sinking, risk, wrist, crisp, strict, limp, limpid, hinted, glimpse, dimmer, slipper, glitter, hissing, kitten, river, mirror, spirit, chirrup, miracle, squirrel, stirrup, spirited.*

(*Fir, firm, first, dirt, thirst, bird, irksome, girl, whirl, birth, birch, thirty, squirted, chirping, girdle, girt, irk, mirth.* See Note, below.)

- (2) long 'i' ('ei') : as in *pilot, mild, nine, wire, I.*  
The English long 'i' sound is not a simple vowel, but a diphthong. It is therefore treated and illustrated in the next chapter, Chapter II, (C), p. 27.

- (3) 'i' with long 'e' sound ('ee') : as in a few words, mostly of foreign origin : *régime* ('raizheem'), *intrigue* ('-eeg'), *suite* ('sweet'), *pique* ('peek'), *physique*, *routine* ('-teen'), *marine, police, machine, machinery, glycerine, iodine* ('-een'), *ravine, quinine* ('-een'), *strychnine, unique, oblique.*

Note.—The true sound of short 'i' with 'r' is that heard in such words as *spirit, squirrel, mirror.* The words in brackets above, under short 'i' (such as *fir, girl, dirt*, etc.) have the long neutral vowel sound, exactly like 'er'. Compare *fir, infer* ; *dirt, inert* ; *firm, term* ; *first, erst* ; *bird, erred* ; *birch, berch.* See Note 2 on p. 14, and Chapter III, v.

#### (D) THE LETTER 'Y' AS A VOWEL

'y' as a vowel is sounded just like 'i', both short and long.

Examples :

- (1) like short 'i' ('i') : as in *myth* ('mith'), *mystery, mystic, hymn, symbol, sympathy, symmetry, nymph, lymph, gymnastics, syllable, pyramid, system, crystal,*

*symphony, symptom, syndicate, syncope, synod, synonym, syntax, syrup, syringe, synthesis, typical, tyranny, cylinder, cymbal, cynic, dysentery, hyssop, hypocrite, hysteria, lynx, lynch, myriad, pygmy, pyx, rhythm, lyric, lyrical.*

(*Myrtle, myrrh, myrmidon* : see Note below.)

- (2) **like long 'i' ('ei')** : as in *by, my, pylon, cycle, tyre*.  
Like long 'i', long 'y' is not a simple vowel, but a diphthong; so it is illustrated in the next chapter, Chapter II, (C), (2).

Note.—The short 'y' sound with 'r' is just the same as that of short 'i' with 'r'; compare *lyrical* with *miracle*. The long neutral sound of '-er' is heard in *myrrh, myrtle*, which have just the same sound as *her, fir*. Compare *myrtle, hurtle*; *myrrh* and *err, fir, fur, wor(thy)*. See Chapter III, v, for the long neutral vowel sound.

### (E) THE LETTER 'O'

Say these words aloud, and note the difference of the vowel sounds in each pair : *rob, robe* ('roab'); *cod, code*; *off, loaf*; *log, rogue*; *holly, holy*; *con, cone*; *mop, mope*; *moss, rose*; *cloth, both* ('boath'); *cox, coax*; *sorry, sower*.

The first word of each pair has the short 'o' sound, and the second the long 'o' sound.

Examples :

- (1) **short 'o' ('o')** : as in *cob, cobbler, sobbing, rod, coddle, off, soft, log, boggy, dodge, lodger, rock, hockey, folly, hollow, from, bomb, bonny, honour, top, copper, toss, lost, crossed, not, bottle, hover, poverty, pox, foxy, lozenge, bother, notched, long, wrong, songster, gone, college, knowledge, sorry, horrid, morrow, florid, sorrow, horrible*.
- (2) **long 'o' ('oa')** : as in *cobra, sofa, solo, rogue, oh!, holy, wholly, potent, most, ghost, dozing, broken, soldier,*



*fold, sold, both, loth, don't, won't, blow, flowing, coping, poet, poem, roving, propóse, polar, solar, roll, yolk.*

And with mute 'e' after following consonant: *robe, code, coke, hole, home, postpone, rope, rose, note, cove, explode, expose, impose, connóte, tone, telephone, etc.*

- (3) 'o' with '-r' ('or', 'ore', sounded like 'aur'): as in *nor, core* ('*naur*', '*kaur*'), *for, fore, shore, corbel, orb, ford, sword, horde, organ, forge, orgy, cork, fork, storm, normal, corn, forlorn, thorpe, corpse, torpid, horse, force, sort, snorted, mortal, torch, scorch, north, portion, sore, store, lore, before, tore, important, forth, porch, orchard.*

These are the principal 'o' sounds; but this vowel letter irregularly stands for these other vowel sounds in certain words:—

- (4) the short 'u' sound: as in *money, honey* ('*muni*', '*huni*'), *son, ton, won, done, one, once* ('*sun*', etc., '*wuns*'), *front* ('*frunt*'), *frontier, monkey, monk, mongrel, wonder, company, comfort, constable, stomach, come, some* ('*kum*', '*sum*'), *love, dove, glove, above* ('-uv'), *cover, discover, other, brother, mother, smother, another, does* ('*duz*'), *worry, doth* ('*duth*'), *dost* ('*dust*'); *month, Monday.*

(*Word, worth, worthy, worship, work, worm, worse, worst, world, wort, whortleberry*; pronounced '*werd*', '*werth*', '*werk*', etc.; see Note 3, below.)

- (5) the long 'oo' sound: as in *do, to, two* ('*doo*', '*too*'), *who, whose, whom, lose* ('*hoo*', '*hooz*', '*hoom*', '*looz*'), *move, prove* ('*moov*', '*proof*'), *womb, tomb* ('*woom*', '*toom*').

- (6) the short 'oo' sound: as in *bosom, woman, wolf* ('*būzm*', '*wūmən*', '*wūlf*').

For the difference between the sound of long and short 'oo', see Section (g). The vowel sound of *bosom*, for

example, is something between 'boozm' and 'buzm', like the sound in *good* ('gūd').

(Note the curious pronunciation of *women* ('wimən'). The spelling with 'o' is a mistake, the word *woman* being originally 'wifman', a contraction of 'wife-man'. In the tenth century it became 'wimman', plural 'wimmen', and in the twelfth century 'wumman'. Finally, *woman*.)

### Notes:

1. The proper short 'o' sound with '-r' is that heard in such words as *florid*, *horrid*, *sorry*, *tomorrow*, *porridge*.

2. The long 'o' sound is not heard with '-r' (which converts it into the '-au' sound (as in *for*, *fore*). But we can gather what it would be like if such words as *grower*, *blower*, *goer*, are pronounced rapidly as one-syllable words. This will show that the sound of 'o' in such words as *or*, *fore*, *port*, etc., is not the long 'o', nor the short 'o' either, but 'au' (so: 'aur', 'faur', 'paurt').

Say these words aloud to hear the difference between these three sounds of 'o' with '-r': *sorry* (short 'o'); *sore* (the 'au' sound); *sower* (long 'o').

3. The words in brackets above (under (4) short 'u' sound), (*word*, *work*, etc.), have the long neutral '-er' sound, referred to on p. 14, Note 2, and p. 17, Note. Say aloud these words, which have exactly the same sound: *jerk*, *irk*, *work*; *herd*, *bird*, *word*; *term*, *squirm*, *worm*; *berth*, *girth*, *worth*; *erst*, *first*, *worst*.

(See Chapter III, v, for the long neutral vowel sound.)

### (F) THE LETTER 'U'

Say these words aloud, and note their different vowel sounds: *tub*, *tube*; *mud*, *nude*; *hug*, *huge*; *sum*, *assume*; *tun*, *tune*; *us*, *use*; *cut*, *cute*.

The vowel sound of the first of each pair is short 'u'; that in the second is long 'u'.

Examples :

- (1) short 'u' ('u') : as in *cub*, *rubbing* ; *bud*, *huddle* ; *huff*, *stuff* ; *mug*, *nugget* ; *judge*, *trudging* ; *stuck*, *lucky* ; *dull*, *sully* ; *sum*, *summer* ; *run*, *hunt* ; *cup*, *upper* ; *curry*, *furrow* ; *hurry* ; *us*, *jussy* ; *rut*, *utter* ; *much*, *crutch* ; *crux*, *bucks* ; *fuzzy*, *muzzle* ; *brush*, *hushed* ; *rust*, *dusty* ; *sung*, *lungs* ; *sunk*, *drunken* ; *fund*, *bundle* ; *abundant*, *thunder*.

(*Burr*, *burden*, *fur*, *lurch*, *murky*, *purr*, *burst*, *curse*, *turn*, *turf*, *absurd*, *curb*, *urge*, *hurt*, *curve*, *lurk*, *murder*, *church*, *cur*. See Note, below.)

- (2) long 'u' ('eu') : as in *cube*, *dude*, *pure*.

The English long 'u' sound is not a simple vowel, but a diphthong ; so it is illustrated in the next chapter, Chapter II, 'Diphthongs', (D).

(Note.—The proper short 'u' sound followed by '-r' is heard in such words as *hurry*, *flurried*, *burrow*, *curry*, *furrow*. The words above in brackets (*fur*, *church*, *burden*, etc.) have the long neutral vowel sound, the same as in '-er', '-ir'. Say these words aloud, and you will hear this : *refer*, *fir*, *fur* ; *inert*, *hurt*, *shirt* ; *herd*, *third*, *absurd*, *word*. See Note 2 on p. 14, and Chapter III, v.

Repeat these words to hear the proper short sounds of the vowels 'e', 'i' and 'u' with '-r' : *ferry*, *stirrup*, *hurry* ; *ferret*, *spirit*, *turret* ; *American*, *miracle*, *hurricane*.)

- (3) In a few words 'u' has, irregularly, these sounds :—

(a) the short 'i' sound : in *busy*, *business* ('bizi', 'biznəs').

(b) the short 'e' sound : in *bury*, *burial*, *buried* ('beri', 'berial', berid').

We have now discussed the five vowel letters and the various sounds they represent in English ; but there remain

- two digraphs, as they are called (see Chapter II), which must be included in this chapter ; for they represent two simple vowel sounds not represented by the regular vowel letters. These are, 'oo' and 'au' (also spelt 'aw'). The sound of 'oo' is the true long 'u' sound, for which in other European languages the letter 'u' stands. The sound of 'au' is also simple, in spite of the fact that the sign is a digraph (two letters). It is, in fact, the short 'o' sound lengthened out and drawled. If the word *dog*, for example, is pronounced in a drawing way (as it is in some English dialects) it becomes 'dawg', or 'daug'. In the same way, a common but objectionable pronunciation of the word *God*, is 'Gaud'.

## (G) THE DIGRAPH 'OO'

Say these words aloud, and try to catch their different shades of sound : *gloom*, *good*, *blood*. The first (*gloom*) has the long 'oo' sound ; the second (*good*), the short 'oo' sound ; and the third (*blood*), the sound of short 'u'. ('gloom', 'gūd', 'blud').

Examples :

- (1) long 'oo' ('oo') : as in *coo*, *too*, *woo*, *moo*, *zoo*, *boon*, *croon*, *coon*, *loon*, *moon*, *noon*, *soon*, *spoon*, *boom*, *loom*, *gloom*, *groom*, *doom*, *broom*, *bloom*, *room*, *food*, *brood*, *mood*, *fool*, *stool*, *cool*, *tool*, *school*, *coop*, *droop*, *poop*, *troop*, *noose*, *ooze*, *loop*, *rood*, *moor*, *boor*, *spoor*, *poor*, *boorish*, *gloomy*, *mooning*, *crooner*, *groove*, *hooves*, *root*, *roof*, *hoof*, *boot*.
- (2) short 'oo' ('ū') : as in *good*, *stood*, *hood*, *foot*, *soot*, *wood*, *book*, *brook*, *rook*, *forsook*, *look* ('gūd', 'sūt', 'būk', etc.)
- (3) short 'u' sound : only in *blood*, *bloody* ('blud', 'bludi') ; *flood*, *flooded* ('flud', 'fluded').

## Notes:

1. It is not easy to catch the slight difference between the sounds of long 'oo' (as in *moon*, *room*, *stool*) and of short 'oo' (as in *good*, *soot*, *book*). But there is a difference. The sound of *mood*, for instance, is full and long, while the sound of *good* is sharper and shorter, though not so short as that of *blood*. It is something between the long 'oo' and the short 'u'. Try to hear the difference between *root* and *soot*; *mood* and *good*; *boom* and *book* ('root', 'sūt', 'mood', 'gūd'; 'boom', 'būk').

2. The words *door* and *floor* are pronounced with the 'au' sound, to rhyme with *more* ('daur', 'flaur'), and not like *moor*.

## (H) THE DIGRAPH 'AU' (AND 'AW')

## Examples:

- (1) 'au': as in *laud*, *gaudy*, *applaud*, *fraud*, *audit*, *audible*, *audience*, *daub*, *auger*, *August*, *auction*, *pause*, *because*, *applause*, *auspice*, *author*, *autocrat*, *automatic*, *authority*, *nautical*, *taut*, *bauble*, *caution*, *faun*, *caustic*, *jaunt*, *jaunty*, *vaunt*, *haul*, *avaunt*, *flaunt*, *gaunt*, *gauntlet*, *haunch*, *paunch*, *haunt*, *jaundice*, *launch*, *laundry*, *saunter*, *staunch*, *taught*, *naught*, *caught*, *naughty*, *daughter*.

(Exceptions: *gauge*, *aunt*, pronounced 'gaij', 'aant'. Also, with the short 'o' sound: *sausage*, *cauliflower*, 'sosij', 'koliflour'.)

- (2) 'aw': as in *awe*, *awl*, *bawl*, *brawl*, *crawl*, *caw*, *craw*, *daw*, *draw*, *drawl*, *flaw*, *claw*, *law*, *lawyer*, *maw*, *gnaw*, *paw*, *prawn*, *raw*, *saw*, *straw*, *scrawl*, *sprawl*, *trawler*, *yawl*, *awful*, *awkward*, *lawn*, *pawn*, *spawn*, *awning*, *shawl*, *dawn*, *fawn*, *mawkish*, *sawn*.

#### IV. THE VARIOUS SOUNDS REPRESENTED BY THE VOWEL LETTERS

Here, at a glance, are the various sounds represented by each vowel letter. (Odd and exceptional words are given in brackets.)

- 'a': *fat, fate, fare, far, carry, what, water, (any, many ('eni'))*.
- 'e': *them, theme, ferry, infér, óver, (pretty, clerk, fête ('fait'))*.
- 'i': *twin, twine, spirit, girl, marine ('-een')*.
- 'y': *myth, pythón, lyric, myrrh*.
- 'o': *holly, holy, sorry, sore, word, love, move, woman, worry*.
- 'u': *plum, plume, pure, hurry, hurt, full, (busy, bury)*.
- 'oo': *pool, good, (blood ('blud'), floor)*.
- 'au': *fraud, (gauge ('gaij'), aunt ('aant'))*.
- 'aw': *law*.

The same sounds spelt according to the phonetic alphabet given before Chapter I.

- 'a': *fat, fait, faer, faar, kari, hwot, wautər, (eni, meni)*.
- 'e': *dhem, theem, ferrɪ, infer, ovər, (prɪtɪ, klaark, fait)*.
- 'i': *twin, twein, spirit, gerl, mareen*.
- 'y': *myth, peithən, lirɪk, mer*.
- 'o': *holi, hoali, sori, saur, wɜrd, luv, moov, wūman, wurɪ*.
- 'u': *plum, ploom, peur, huri, hert, fūl, (bizɪ, berri)*.
- 'oo': *pool, gūd, (blud, flaur)*.
- 'au': *fraud, (gaij, aant)*.
- 'aw': *lau*.

## CHAPTER II

### DIPHTHONGS AND DIGRAPHS

#### I. DIPHTHONGS

As we have already learnt, a diphthong is a mixed vowel sound, produced by the combination of two simple vowel sounds. For example, the utterance in rapid succession of the two simple vowel sounds 'au' and 'ee' produces a third compound vowel sound represented by the signs 'oi' and 'oy'. This sound is a diphthong, and it is heard in such words as *noise* and *boy*.

In English there are only four true diphthongs. These are 'ou' (also spelt 'ow'); 'oi' (also spelt 'oy'); the vowel long 'i' (also spelt 'y'); and the vowel long 'u' (also spelt 'eu', 'ew', 'ue' and 'ui').

The four diphthongal sounds are thus produced :—

1. 'ou' (and 'ow') : as in *cloud*, *crowd*. This sound is a combination of broad 'a' (as in *father*) and short 'oo' (as in *good*). Say 'aa-oo' rapidly and you will get the mixed sound (diphthong) heard in *shout*, *brown*.
2. 'oi' (and 'oy') : as in *toil*, *toy*. This is a combination of the sounds of 'au' (as in *fraud*) and long 'e' (as in *see*). Say 'au-ee' in rapid succession, and you will get the mixed sound (diphthong) heard in *point*, *alloy*.
3. long 'i' (and long 'y') : as in *mile*, *cry*. The sound of long 'i' in English is, as we have already learnt, not a simple, but a mixed, vowel sound. It is produced by sounding in rapid succession the simple vowel sound of broad 'a' (as in *father*) and long 'e' (as in *wee*). Say 'aa-ee' rapidly and you will hear the mixed sound

(diphthong) of *ripe*, *fly*. (The spelling 'ai', like the German diphthong 'ai' in *Kaiser*, is seen in the word *aisle*, which is pronounced as 'eil' (to rime with *pile*).

4. long 'u' (and 'eu', 'ew', 'ue', 'ui'): as in *tune*, *feud*, *few*, *due*, *suit*. The English long 'u', too, is not a simple, but a mixed, vowel sound. It is a compound of the sounds of long 'e' and 'oo'. Say in rapid succession 'tee-oon', and you will get the word *tune*. In the same way, *few* is 'fee-oo'; *feud* is 'fee-ood'; 'dee-oo' is *due*; and 'see-oot' is *suit*. (Try to hear the difference in sound between *pure* and *poor*; *feud* and *food*; *suit* and *root*.)

We must remember that a diphthong is a *sound*, not a mere combination of letters (which is called a digraph). And (so irregular is English spelling) each of the four diphthongs is represented by different letters or combinations of letters. Thus 'ou' is spelt both as 'ou' and as 'ow'; but this does not make two diphthongs, but only one, spelt in two different ways. The diphthong is the sound represented by both 'ou' and 'ow'. Further, neither 'ou' nor 'ow' always represents the diphthong; for in such words as *grow*, *blow* and *slow*, 'ow' represents the simple vowel sound of long 'o'; and in such words as *soul*, *touch*, *ought*, 'ou' represents the simple vowel sounds of long 'o', short 'u' and 'au' respectively, and not the diphthong.

The sounds of the four diphthongs are represented by these different spellings:—

1. 'ou': 'ou' (as in *found*); 'ow' (as in *how*).
2. 'oi': 'oi' (as in *coin*); 'oy' (as in *joy*).
3. long 'i': 'i' (as in *pilot*); 'i' with mute 'g' (as in *sign*); 'i' with mute 'gh' (as in *high*); 'y' (as in *try*); 'ie' (as in *lie*); 'ei' (as in *eider-duck*); 'ui' (as in



*guide*) ; ' uy ' (as in *guy*) ; and by these odd spellings :  
*eye, island, aisle, choir, rye, indict, I.*

4. long ' u ' : ' u ' (as in *tube*) ; ' ue ' (as in *hue*) ;  
 ' eu ' (as in *neutral*) ; ' ew ' (as in *dew*) ; ' ui ' (as in  
*suit*).

Let us now consider these more in detail. (The words  
 given as examples should be said and repeated aloud.)

(A) The Diphthong ' ou ' ( ' ow ' ).

(1) ' ou ' :

(a) As a diphthong ( ' ou ' ) : as in *cloud, count, bout, about, gout, flout, round, ground, sound, bound, pound, fount, mountain, house, mouse, thousand, foul, trout, crouch, slouch, couch, pouch, lounge, plough, doughty, proud, loud, devout, trousers, rousing, ounce, our, hour, sour, pouring, scour.*

Besides this true diphthongal sound, ' ou ' represents no less than seven other (simple) vowel sounds :—

(b) As long ' o ' ( ' oa ' ) : as in *soul, mould, shoulder, dough, though, boulder.*

(c) As short ' u ' ( ' u ' ) : as in *country, courage, double, trouble, young, touch, tough, rough.*

(d) As long ' u ' ( ' eu ' ) : as in *you, youth.*

(e) As long ' oo ' ( ' oo ' ) : as in *soup, through, group, route.*

(f) As short ' oo ' ( ' ū ' ) : as in *could, would, should.*

(g) As ' au ' ( ' aw ' ) : as in *ought, fought, bought, nought, sought ; brought.*

and with ' -r ' ( ' aur ' ) : as in *four, pour, pouring, court, courtier.*

(h) Long neutral sound ( ' -er ' ) : as in *journey* ( ' jerni ' ), *journal, scourge, courtesy, adjourn.*

(2) ' ow ' :

(a) As a diphthong ( ' ou ' ) : as in *cow, how, howl, crowd, crown, brown, down, frown, gown, clown, town,*

*owl, fowl, growl, prow, towel, trowel, power, tower, cower, brow, vow, prow, bow (bend), sow (pig), row (noise), bows (of boat), now, shower, coward.*

In certain words, however, 'ow' does not represent the diphthong, but the simple vowel sound of long 'o':—

(b) As long 'o' ('oa'): as in *crow, blow, below, flow, grow, growth, low, mow (cut grass), show, stow, snow, tow, mower, know, bowl, bowler, flown, bow (tie), sow (seed), row (line, propel a boat).*

(B) The Diphthong 'oi' ('oy').

(1) 'oi': as in *voice, rejoice, void, avoid, coif, oil, coil, foiled, spoilt, moil, toiling, soil, boil, loin, join, groin, noise, poison, foist, moist, joist, joint, point, coin, coinage, poignant, hoist, exploit.*

(2) 'oy': as in *boy, coy, joy, cloy, ahoy!, annoy, alloy, employ, employer, employment, enjoy, deploy, royal, loyal, voyage, toy, destroyer, joyful, convoy.*

Note.—'oi' and 'oy' do not represent any other sound, except in some French words, like *chamois* ('shamwaa'), *memoir* ('memwaar').

(C) The diphthong long 'i' ('ei'):

(1) 'i': as in *tribe, ride, fife, oblige, like, mile, time, nine, ripe, wire, fired, tiring, wise, nice, bite, blithe, alive, prize, I, sigh, might, sign, riot, defiant, violence, pirate, pilot, agonize, incite, reliant, pliant, finite, advise, advisory, title, bind, mind, grinder, child, mild, wilder.*

(2) 'y': as in *by, cry, dry, fly, fry, pry, my, sky, sty, why, bypath, by-law, rye, lying, trying, shy, rhyme, style, pylon, hydrant, scythe, hyphen, cypress, dynamite, gyves, psychic, psychology, hypothesis, python, pyre, tyrant, type, typhoid, lyre, tyre, byre, hyena, hybrid, hyacinth, hydra, hydraulic, hydrogen, gyrate, dynamo, cycle, bystander.*

(The long 'y' sound is exactly the same as the long 'i' sound.)

- (D) The diphthong long 'u' ('eu'): as in *cube*, *tubular*, *dude*, *duke*, *huge*, *mule*, *duel*, *assume*, *tune*, *dupe*, *stupid*, *pure*, *immure*, *curative*, *music*, *fuse*, *tutor*, *astute*, *elocution*, *phile*, *casual*, *manual*, *volume*, *prelude*, *educate*.

### Notes:

1. In a few words, 'u' has, irregularly, the short 'oo' sound: as in *bull* ('būl'), *full*; *push* ('pūsh'); *cushion* ('kūshn'), *sugar* ('shūgər').

(Note the difference of sounds in (a) *pull* and *pule*; *pull* and *dull*. (b) *push* and *rush*; *cushion* and *Russian*. (c) *sugar* and *lugger*: *sugar* and *huger*.)

2. When long 'u', begins a word, it is pronounced as 'yeu'. thus *unit* is pronounced 'yeunit'; *use*, 'yeuz' and 'yeus'; *usurp*, 'yeuzerp'; *usual*, 'yeuzheual'; *uniform*, 'yeunifaurm'; etc. (But this is not so with short 'u', as *umpire*, *untired*, *utter*, *us*, etc.) So before initial long 'u' the article is 'a', not 'an': *a unit*, not *an unit*.

### 3. The Sounds of 'eu' and 'oo':

There is some uncertainty about the pronunciation of many words spelt with long 'u', 'ue', 'ui', 'eu' and 'ew', whether they should be sounded 'eu' (ee-oo) or 'oo'. Formerly most of them had the true long 'u', and even *flute* and *lute* were strictly pronounced with the 'ee-oo' sound. The *Oxford English Dictionary* still gives alternative pronunciations for *blue* and *glue* ('bloo' and 'bleu', and 'gleu' and 'gloo'). But for a century and more, the 'oo' sound has been steadily displacing 'ee-oo', especially in southern English speech; yet even now authorities differ about certain words; some, for example, prefer 'see-oot', and others 'soot', for *suit*. So about some words one cannot be dogmatic. There are no fixed rules, but the following show the modern tendencies:

(a) As a rule, 'u', 'ue', 'ui', 'eu', and 'ew' are sounded 'oo' after—'r', 'sh', 'ch', 'j'; and 'l' preceded by a consonant: e.g. *rule, true, bruise, fruit, grew; sure, sugar, chew; June, juice, jewel; flute, recluse, blue, glue, clue, blew, flew, sluice*; and in compounds '-clude' (e.g. *conclude, exclude, include, etc.*), and '-clution' (e.g. *conclusion, seclusion, etc.*).

(b) After 'l', the 'oo' sound is becoming more and more common: 'loo' is slowly but surely displacing 'leu' (Fowler, *Modern English Usage*). The following are now generally pronounced 'oo': e.g. *lucent* ('loosənt'), *lucid, lucre, ludicrous, luminous, illuminate, lunar, lunatic, lunacy, lute, salute, absolute*. (But these are still pronounced with the long 'u' sound—'eu': *lurid* ('leurid'), *allude, prelude, interlude, illumine*.)

(c) In unaccented syllables, the long 'u' sound still holds its own: e.g. in *volume, annual, visual, usual, casual, sensual, sensuous, salutary, education, value, valuable, argue, arguable, issue, celluloid, pilule, regular, accurate, accuracy, genuine*; etc.

(Notice that in such words the long 'u' has the 'y' sound preceding it, as it has when initial in words like *use, euphony*, etc.; thus—'anyeu'al', 'regyeu'lar', 'valyeu'.)

(d) Before '-r' and '-re', the sound of long 'u' still, as a rule, prevails: e.g. *pure* ('peur'), *cure, lure, lurid, immature, alluring, curative, purity*. (With these may be classed—*fewer, ewer, sewer, newer*.)

## II. DIGRAPHS

The word 'digraph' (literally 'twice-written', or 'two letters') is the name given to any group of two letters expressing one sound, whether they be consonants or vowels. For example, 'th', 'ch', 'ph', and 'ea', 'ie', 'aw', are all 'digraphs'. But here we are to deal only with combinations of vowel letters.

What is the difference between a 'digraph' and a 'diphthong'? This: a diphthong is a combination of *sounds*; a digraph is a combination of *letters*. Generally (but not always, for the English single letters long 'i' and long 'u' are diphthongs in sound) a diphthong is also a digraph (e.g. 'ou' and 'oi'); but there are many vowel digraphs that are not diphthongs. The digraph 'ou' is a diphthong, because it represents a mixed or compound sound (viz. 'aa-oo'); but the digraph 'ea' is not a diphthong, for it represents a simple vowel sound (viz. either long 'e' (*bead*), or short 'e' (*head*)).

We may classify vowel digraphs in this way:—

- (1) Digraphs which are also true diphthongs: these are 'ou', 'ow', 'oi', 'oy', and 'eu', 'ew', 'ue', 'ui', with the sound of long 'u'. Also, when they have the sound of long 'i', 'uy', 'ie', and 'ei'.
- (2) Digraphs not diphthongs, which are the only representatives of certain simple vowel sounds, viz.: 'au', 'aw', 'oo'. (To these may be added 'ee', which is a useful representative of the long 'e' sound.)
- (3) Digraphs which are superfluous, because they represent vowel sounds already represented by the vowel letters: viz. 'ae', 'eh', 'oh', 'ah', 'aa', 'ai', 'ay', 'ea', 'ei', 'eo', 'ey', 'ie', 'oa', 'oe', 'ow' (as long 'o').

The interjections, *Ah! Oh! Eh!* are useful, and might be retained; and 'ah' would be a good alternative to 'aa' for the broad 'a' sound, if preferred (so: 'fahdhær', 'bahth', etc.). But in the forming of an approach to a phonetic alphabet of existing letters, all we should need would be the following: four signs for the four diphthongs, say 'ou', 'oi', 'ei' (for long 'i' sound), and, say, 'eu' (for the long 'u' sound). Then 'au' and 'oo' for those two simple vowel sounds not otherwise represented. These, with 'ai' for long 'a', 'ae' for long 'a' with '-r', 'aa'

for broad 'a', 'ee' for long 'ee' sound, and 'oa' for long 'o' sound, and 'er' for the long neutral sound, would be all we want. This would enable us to get rid altogether of the following unnecessary digraphs: 'ow', 'oy', 'ew', 'ue', 'ui', 'uy', 'ay', 'ea', 'eo', 'ey', 'ie', 'oe', along with 'ah', 'oh', 'eh' except as interjections. That is, fifteen confusing signs dropped.

However, until English spelling is reformed and simplified on some rational and consistent principle, these digraphs will remain. And, as they play an important part in the present system (or 'no-system') of spelling, their use must be learnt and understood. The following tables should be carefully studied.

We may classify the digraphs, roughly, according to the vowel sounds they mainly represent; though this arrangement is defective, because most of them, like the vowel letters, represent more than one sound each.

### III. SOUNDS REPRESENTED BY DIGRAPHS

#### (A) The sound of long 'a' (as in *lay, game*) ('ai').

- (1) 'ai': as in *bail, tail, grain, main, faint, paint, against, aid, maid, bait, gait, praise, waist, waive, waif, afraid, sailor, claim, aim, pain, train, wail, hail, braid, jail, raining.*

(Exceptions: *said* ('sed'), *aisle* ('eil'), *plait* ('plat'), *plaid* ('plad').)

- (2) 'ay': as in *bay, bray, clay, day, dray, fay, gay, gray, hay, jay, lay, may, nay, pay, play, pray, say, stay, slay, stray, tray, betray, betrayal, way, array, payment, playing, stayer, plays.*

(Exceptions: *quay* ('kee'), *says* ('sez').)

- (3) 'ey': as in *bey, dey, obey, fey, grey, they, whey, convey, conveyance, survey, surveyor, abeyance, purvey, greyhound, hey-day, Hey!*

(Exceptions: *key* ('kee'), *eye* ('ei').)

- (4) 'ei': as in *veil, vein, rein, reindeer, feint, seine, heinous, geisha, inveigle, reign, feign, deign, obeisance, weigh, weight, freight, neigh, neighbour, inveigh*.

(Note.—For other sounds of 'ei', see under (B).)

(B) The sound of the vowel 'e'.

(I) 'ea'.

(a) long 'e' sound ('ee'): as in *sea, tea, pea, plea, each, reach, teach, bead, mead, knead, read* (pres tense), *lead* (verb), *leaf, sheaf, eager, league, beak, leak, speak, weak, heal, meal, seal, leal, beam, dream, gleam, steam, team, bean, dean, lean, mean, leap, reap, car, fear, near, spear, tear* (of eyes), *ease, please, grease, reason, beat, cheat, feat, meat, retreat, wheat, weave, leave, heave, sheaves, heath, sheath, breathe, wreath, hear, beard, leash, weary, dreary*.

(b) short 'e' sound: as in *bread* ('bred'), *dead, head, stead, instead, steady, tread, lead* (metal), *leaden, treadle, meadow, ready, read* (past tense), *treachery, deaf, dreamt, seamstress, leant, cleanse, cleanliness, leapt, breast, peasant, pleasant, pheasant, pleasure, treasure, measure, health, wealth, stealth, stealthy, death, breath, heather, leather, weather, heaven, endeavour, leaven, breakfast* ('brekfæst').

(*Earth, dearth, earn, yearn, earnest, learn, heard, earl, hearse, search*.)

(Note.—The words in brackets have the long neutral sound. See Chapter III, v. Compare *earth, firth, worth; hearse, terse, nurse, worse*, etc.)

Exceptional sounds:—

(c) long 'a' sound: only in *break, steak, great, yea* ('braik', 'stâik', 'grait', 'yai').

(d) long 'a' with '-re': only in *bear, tear* (rend), *pear* ('baer', 'taer', 'paer').

(e) broad 'a' sound: only in *heart, hearth, harken* ('haart', 'haarth', 'haarkn').

(Note.—The double sound of the digraph 'ea' is very confusing. How are we to know, for instance, from the sentence, 'They *read* the newspapers', whether *read* is the present tense ('reed'), or the past ('red')? In the sentence, 'She shed a *tear* ('teer') over the *tear* ('taer') in her dress', we have to pronounce the same spelling in two different ways.

Further, words in 'ea' closely related are pronounced differently. For example, we say *please* ('pleez'), but *pleasant* ('plezənt'); *lean* ('leen'), but *leant* ('lent'), etc.

## Long 'e'.

## Short 'e'.

<i>please</i> ('pleez')	<i>pleasant, pleasure</i> ('plezənt')
<i>dream</i> ('dreem')	<i>dreamt</i> ('dremt')
<i>lean</i> ('leen')	<i>leant</i> ('lent')
<i>mean</i> ('meen')	<i>meant</i> ('ment')
<i>weal</i> ('weel')	<i>wealth</i> ('welth')
<i>heal</i> ('heel')	<i>health</i> ('helth')
<i>steal</i> ('steel')	<i>stealth, stealthy</i> ('stelth')
<i>zeal</i> ('zeel')	<i>zealous</i> ('zelus')
<i>read</i> (pres.) ('reed')	<i>read</i> (past) ('red')
<i>mead</i> ('meed')	<i>meadow</i> ('medo')
<i>leap</i> ('leep')	<i>leapt</i> ('lept')
<i>heath</i> ('heeth')	<i>heather</i> ('hedhər')
<i>clean</i> ('kleen')	<i>cleanse</i> ('klenz'), <i>cleanliness</i> ( 'klenlines')
<i>hear</i> ('heer')	<i>heard</i> (long neutral sound, 'herd')
<i>breathe</i> ('breedh')	<i>breath</i> ('breth')
<i>heave</i> ('heev')	<i>heaven</i> ('hevn')
<i>seam</i> ('seem')	<i>seamstress</i> ('semstres')
<i>break</i> ('braik')	<i>breakfast</i> ('brekfəst')

Perhaps the best way to remember these two pronunciations of 'ea' is to learn the words (fewer in number) in which 'ea' is short 'e', and keep in mind that all the rest (except the few noted under (c), (d) and (e) above) are pronounced as if spelt with 'ee'.



The first two lines of these verses written by Lord Cromer illustrate this point, and the rest other anomalies of English spelling :—

‘ When the English tongue we speak,  
Why is *break* not rhymed with *freak* ?  
Will you tell me why it’s true  
We say *sew*, but likewise *Jew* ?  
*Beard* sounds not the same as *heard* ;  
*Cord* is different from *word* ;  
*Cow* is cow, but *low* is low,  
*Shoe* is never rhymed with *foe* ;  
And since *pay* is rhymed with *say*,  
Why not *paid* with *said*, I pray ?  
And, in short, it seems to me  
Sounds and letters disagree.’

The last line sums up the problem of English spelling.

- (2) ‘ae’ (long ‘e’). This digraph occurs in only a few words, mostly of Greek origin : e.g. *aesthetic* (‘eesthetik’), *aether* (also spelt *ether*), *aeon* (also spelt *eon*), *anaemia*, *anaesthetic*, etc. *Caesar*, *paean*, *daedal*, *maenad*, *faeces*, *caecum*; *haemorrhage* (short ‘e’).

(Note.—*aerodrome* has the long ‘a’ sound—‘aero’.  
Exception : *maelstrom* (‘ai’).)

- (3) ‘ie’. (Two sounds : (a) long ‘e’ ; (b) long ‘i’.)

(a) long ‘e’ (‘ee’) : as in *brief*, *grief*, *belief*, *lief*, *chief*, *thief*, *fief*, *fiend*, *liege*, *mien*, *siege*, *bestege*, *yield*, *field*, *piece*, *niece*, *bier*, *tier*, *pierrôt*, *priest*, *fierce*, *pierce*, *thievish*, *grieve*, *grievous*, *grievance*, *believe*, *reprieve*, *retrieve*, *achieve*, *relieve*.

(Exceptions : *friend* (pronounced ‘frend’), *sieve* (pronounced ‘siv’).)

(b) long ‘i’ (‘ei’) : as in *die*, *fie*, *lie*, *pie*, *hie*, *vie*, *tie*, *pred*, *died*, *hied*, *hierarchy*, *hieroglyphics*, *hierophant*, *hieratic*.

Also in the past tense and participle forms of verbs ending in 'y': e.g. *cried* (*cry*), *tried* (*try*), *dried* (*dry*), *implied*, *fried*, *complied*, *spied*, *defied*, *espied*, *supplied*, etc.

### Notes:

1. With 'w', and with 'u', 'ie' takes the sound of long 'u' in such words as *lieu*, *view*, *review*. In the curious word *lieutenant* it becomes 'ef', for the word is pronounced 'leftenant' (French *lieu*, in place of).

2. In certain words, 'ie' is not the digraph but two syllables: e.g. *diet* ('dei-et'), *client* ('klei-ent'), *science*, *piety*, *quiet*, *siesta* ('see-esta'), *trier*, *pliers*, *triennial*, *biennial*, etc.

(4) 'ei'. (Three sounds: (a) long 'e'; (b) long 'i'; (c) long 'a'.)

(a) long 'e' sound ('ee'): as in *receive*, *receipt*, *deceive*, *deceit*, *conceive*, *conceit*, *perceive*, *seize*, *weir*, *weird*, *either*, *neither*, *ceiling*, *plebeian*, *counterfeit*.

(Note.—*leisure*, *heifer*, have the sound of short 'e', pronounced 'lezher', 'hefer'.)

(b) long 'i' sound ('ei'): as in *seismic*, *gneiss*, *meiosis*, *seismograph*, *eider-duck*, *either*, *neither* (also pronounced 'eedher', 'needher'), *height*, *sleight* (of hand).

(And some words, like *zeit-geist* (spirit of the times), from the German, in which 'ei' is always the diphthong long 'i'.)

(c) long 'a' sound ('ai'): as in *veil*, *feint*, *neigh*, etc.  
(See full list under (A) above.)

### Notes:

1. In some words with 'ei', the 'ei' is not a digraph, but is pronounced as two syllables. For example: *deity* ('dee-iti'), *being* ('bee-ing'), *reissue* ('ree-iseu'), *reinstate*, *reinforce*, *spontaneity*, etc.

2. One spelling problem is when to use 'ei' and 'ie' in certain words, like *believe* and *receive*. This little rime will help as a guide :—

“ i ” before “ e ”  
except after “ c ”.

That is, when the digraph comes immediately after the letter 'c' in a word, it will be 'ei'; when it comes immediately after any other consonant, it will be 'ie'.

For example : “ i ” before “ e ” : as in *believe*, *relieve*,  
*grief*, *reprieve*, etc.

“ except after “ c ” ” : as in *receive*,  
*perceive*, *conceit*, *deceit*, etc.

The list given above under 4 (a) is a complete list of the words in which 'ei' has the sound of long 'e'.

(5) 'ee'. (One sound : long 'e'.)

As in, *bee*, *flee*, *tree*, *keep*, *beech*, *peer*.

(The sound of 'ee' is always the same.)

(C) The sound of the vowel long 'o'.

(1) 'oa' : as in *coal*, *coach*, *roach*, *load*, *goad*, *road*,  
*toad*, *loaf*, *oaf*, *oak*, *croak*, *goal*, *foal*, *foam*, *roam*,  
*loam*, *roan*, *loan*, *moan*, *groan*, *soap*, *coast*, *boast*, *roast*,  
*toast*, *coat*, *boat*, *float*, *goat*, *moat*, *stoat*, *oats*, *bloated*,  
*oath*, *loath*, *loathe*, *loaves*, *hoax*.

(Exception : *brôad*, pronounced 'braud'.)

(Note.—In such words as *boa*, *oasis*, the letters 'oa' are not the digraph, but two syllables : 'bo-a', 'o-asis'.)

(2) 'oe'. (Two sounds : (a) long 'o'; (b) long 'e'.)

(a) long 'o' : as in *roe*, *roes*, *toe*, *foe*, *foeman*, *woe*, *doe*,  
*does* (plural of 'doe').

(But *does*, 3rd pers. sing. of present tense of *to do*, is pronounced 'duz'.)

(b) Long 'e': as in *phoenix* ('feenix'), *Phoenician*, *oesophagus*, *oestrum*, *poenology* (also spelt *penology*).

(3) 'eo'. (Three sounds: (a) long 'o'; (b) long 'e'; (c) short 'e'.)

(a) long 'o': only in *yeoman*.

(b) long 'e': only in *people*, *theory*, *theorem*.

(c) short 'e': only in *leopard*, *jeopardy*, *Geoffrey*.

(Note.—In such words as these, the letters 'eo' are not the digraph, but two syllables: *geometry* ('jee-ometri'), *geology*, *peony*, *neophyte*, *theology*, *reopen*, *reorganize*, *preoccupied*, etc.)

#### (D) The sound of the diphthong long 'u'.

As was pointed out on page 28, all these four digraphs, 'ue', 'eu', 'ew' and 'ui', represent the long 'u' sound; but they also represent the 'oo' sound.

(1) 'ue': (a) long 'u': *due*, *cue*, *sue*, *rue*, *sprue*, *endue*, *imbue*, *value*, *issue*, *virtue*, *hue*, *hued* ('deu', etc.).

(b) long 'oo': *blue*, *glue*, *gruesome*, *true*, *clue* ('bloo', etc.).

Note: In some words with 'ue', the 'ue' is not the digraph, but two separate syllables: e.g., *cruel* ('kroo-əl'), *duel* ('deu-əl'), *suet* ('seu-ət'), *duet* ('deu-et').)

(2) 'eu': (a) long 'u': as in *feud*, *feudal*, *deuce*, *queue*, *neuter*, *neutral*, *neural*, *neurotic*, *pneumonia*, *pneumatic*, *eulogy*, *eugenic*, *euphemism*, *eunuch*, *eucalyptus*, *euphony*, *Teutonic*, *Zeus*, *Europe*, *Eurasian*, *adieu*.

(b) long 'oo': *rheumatism*, *rheum* ('room-etism').

#### Notes:

1. As with initial 'u', so 'eu' at the beginning of words is sounded with a 'y' sound: e.g. *eulogy* is

pronounced 'yeuləji'; *eunuch*, 'yeunək'; *European*, 'yeuropeən', etc. *Ewe*, too, is pronounced 'yeu'.

2. In words like *reunion*, the 'eu' is not the diphthong, but two separate syllables: *re-union*.

3. Note the curious spelling of the word *beauty*—'be(a)uty'.

- (3) 'ew': (a) long 'u': as in *dew*, *few*, *hew*, *hewer*, *lewd*, *new*, *news*, *knew*, *pew*, *yew* (tree), *mew*, *slew*, *stew*, *steward*, *pewter*, *newt*, *askew*, *mews*, *ewe*, *ewer*, *sewer*, *fewer* ('deu', etc.).  
 (b) long 'oo': *grew*, *blew*, *brew*, *chew*, *flew*, *clew*, *drew* ('groo', etc.).

#### Notes:

1. Note the curious spelling of *view*, *review*.

2. Exceptions: *sew* and *shew* have the long 'o' sound, and are pronounced 'soa' 'shoa', (like *sow*, *show*).

3. In such words as *beware*, *bewilder*, *bewail*, *reward*, etc., the 'ew' is not the diphthong, but two separate syllables—*be-ware*, *be-wilder*, *be-wail*, *re-ward*, etc.

- (4) 'ui': (a) long 'u': *suit*, *suitor*, *nuisance*, *puisne* ('peuni'), *pursuit* ('perseut', etc.).  
 (b) long 'oo': *sluice*, *juice*, *fruit*, *bruit*, *recruit* ('sloos', etc.).

#### Notes:

1. Exception: *suite* is pronounced 'sweet'.

2. In such words as the following, 'ui' is not the diphthong, but is pronounced as two syllables: *fluid* (*flu-id*), *druid* (*dru-id*), *ruin* (*ru-in*), *tuition* (*tu-ition*), *fruition* (*fru-ition*), *suicide* (*su-icide*).

3. The long 'u' sound of these four diphthongs, 'ue', 'eu', 'ew' and 'ui', is exactly the same as that of the

diphthong long 'u': e.g. say aloud these words: *muse*, *dues*, *fuse*, *news*; *mute*, *newt*, *suit*, which rime perfectly.

4. At the end of some words 'ue' is mute: e.g. *league* ('leeg'), *plague* ('plaig'), *fugue* ('feug'), *plaque* ('plaak'), *baroque* ('baroak'). In such cases the 'ue' seems to be a sign that the 'g' is hard. See examples of 'u' after 'g' in the next section (E).

(E) The sound of the vowel 'i'.

(1) Long 'i' (diphthong) ('ei').

(a) 'ie': as in *die*, *lie*, *pie*, *vie*, etc. (See list of words under (B) 3 above.)

(b) 'ei': as in *seismic*, *eider*, etc. (See list of words under (B) 4 above.)

(c) 'uy': only in *buy*, *guy*.

(d) 'ui': in *guile*, *beguile*, *guide*, *guise*, *disguise*.

(2) Short 'i' (simple vowel sound).

'ui': in *guild* ('gild'), *guilt*, *guilty*, *guilder*, *guillotine*, *guitar*, *guinea*, *build*.

(Note.—In some other words, 'u' is placed after 'g' to show the 'g' is hard: e.g. *guard*, *guarantee*, *guess*, *guerilla* (war), *guelder-rose*. So it is possible that the above words beginning with 'g' (*guild*, *guilty*, etc.) are not examples of the use of the digraph 'ui', but of the use of a following 'u' to harden 'g'. But even so, the spelling of *build*, *built*, could not be explained in the same way.)

We have now reviewed all the diphthongs and vowel digraphs, and have found that they are almost as irregular and puzzling in their sounds as the vowel letters. The following table gives the various sounds they represent in a brief form.

## IV. SOUNDS OF DIPHTHONGS AND DIGRAPHS

To sum up, here is a table that gives at a glance the various sounds represented by the vowel digraphs. The first word under each digraph gives its main sound, whether diphthongal or simple.

1. 'ou': (a) *cloud* (diph.); (b) *soul*; (c) *touch*; (d) *you*; (e) *soup*, (f) *could*; (g) *ought*; (h) *journey*; (i) *four*. (Nine sounds: two diphthongal, seven simple.)
2. 'ow': (a) *crowd* (diph.); (b) *blow*. (Two sounds: one diphthongal, one simple.)
3. 'oi': (a) *noise*. (One sound: diphthongal. Odd word—*choir* ('kweir').)
4. 'oy': (a) *joy*. (One sound: diphthongal.)
5. 'oo': (a) *gloom*; (b) *good*; (c) *blood*; (d) *door*. (Four sounds: all simple.)
6. 'au': (a) *fraud*. (One sound: simple.)
7. 'aw': (a) *claw*. (One sound: simple.)
8. 'ee': (a) *seem*. (One sound: simple.)
9. 'ai': (a) *mail*; (b) *fair*. (Two sounds: simple. But—*said*.)
10. 'ay': (a) *play*; (b) *prayer*. (Two sounds: simple. But—*says*.)
11. 'ae': (a) *Caesar*; (b) *aeronaut*; (c) *maelstrom*. (Three sounds: simple.)
12. 'ea': (a) *gleam*; (b) *head*; (c) *great*; (d) *pear*. (Four sounds: simple. Note—*breakfast*.)
13. 'ei': (a) *deceive*; (b) *veil*; (c) *height*. (Three sounds: two simple, one diphthongal.)
14. 'ey': (a) *grey*. (One sound: simple.)
15. 'eu': (a) *feud*. (One sound: diphthongal.)
16. 'ew': (a) *few*; (b) *grew*. (Two sounds: one diphthongal, one simple.)

17. 'eo': Only in (a) *people, theory, theorem*; (b) *leopard, jeopardy*; (c) *yeoman*. (Three sounds: simple.)
18. 'ie': (a) *thief*; (b) *died*. (Two sounds: one simple, one diphthongal.)
19. 'oa': (a) *loaf*; (b) *boar, broad*. (Two sounds: simple.)
20. 'oe': (a) *woe*; (b) *phoenix*. (Two sounds: simple.)
21. 'ue': (a) *due*; (b) *blue*. (Two sounds: one diphthongal, one simple.)
22. 'ui': (a) *suit*; (b) *slunce*; (c) *guide*; (d) *build*. (Four sounds: two diphthongal, two simple.)
23. 'uy': (a) *buy, guy*. (One sound: diphthongal.)



## CHAPTER III

### THE NEUTRAL VOWEL SOUNDS IN UNSTRESSED SYLLABLES

THE vowel sounds so far considered, both short and long, are those which occur in stressed or accented syllables. In syllables that are unstressed, the same vowel letters represent rather different sounds; and these must now be explained.

But first we must understand what is meant by an accented or stressed syllable: that is, something must be said about 'accent'.

#### I. ACCENT

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In every English word of two or more syllables, one syllable is pronounced more strongly or emphatically than the others. This syllable is said to have the 'accent' or 'stress', or to be the 'stressed' or 'accented' syllable of the word. For example, in the words *háppy*, *foólísh*, the accent is on the first syllable; in *despáir*, *repórt*, it is on the second; in *understánd*, *coíncide*, it is on the third; and in *examínation*, *apothéosis*, it is on the fourth. Every word has its own accent, and that accent is always on the same syllable, so long as the word remains unaltered. But in 'derivatives' (words derived from other words), especially when the original word is lengthened by the addition of more syllables, the accent is often 'shifted': that is, it falls on another syllable. For example, the accent or stress is on the first syllable of *phótograph*; but it is on the second in *photógraphy*; and is shifted to the third in *photográphic*. So, *válua*, but *valuátion*; *lamént*, but *lámentable*; *pótent*, but *ímpotent*. (But in some derivatives, the accent remains on the same syllable as in the original word: e.g. *váluable* from *válua* (first); *destráble* from *desíre* (second).)

Some long words have two accents, a primary and a secondary stress. That is, besides the main stressed syllable, another syllable is more lightly stressed. For example, in *advertise*, the primary or main accent is on the first syllable; but there is a secondary, or slighter, stress on the third syllable as well. So, also, in *mélanchòly*, *pàrliaméntary*, *àristocràt*, *ùnifórmity*. (The sign of the primary accent is ( ' ), and of the secondary ( ' ' ).)

Accent must not be confused with emphasis. Accent or stress refers to syllables only, and is part of the pronunciation of a word; but emphasis may be put on words, phrases, or even whole sentences. For example, 'I come to *bury* Caesar, not to *praise* him'; 'It is your *inattention to details* that will spoil your career'; 'All I say is, *don't do that again!*'

## II. THE NEUTRAL VOWELS

Now in most monosyllables (words of one syllable) and in the accented syllables of words of more than one, the vowels, short as well as long, have their proper vowel sounds. But in unstressed syllables, their sounds are so modified that all the vowels have much the same sound. This sound is indefinite, and very hard to describe. To be learnt, it has to be listened for in the ordinary speech of those whose native tongue is English. In speaking, we say the unstressed syllables of a word rapidly, and slur them over. For example, say *habitually*, and you will notice that, while you strongly and clearly pronounce the second syllable ('-bit-'), you hurry over the others, and touch on them very lightly. The sound of these hurried, unstressed syllables is short, but it is, not the sound of the ordinary short vowels. The vowels 'a', 'o', 'u' in unstressed syllables have a slight, indeterminate sound, something like a slurred short 'u'; and the vowels 'i', 'y', 'e' have a slight, indeterminate sound, something like a slurred very short 'i'. This sound is called the

short neutral vowel ; or the obscure, the indefinite, or the indeterminate vowel sound. (In phonetics it is represented by the symbol 'ə', a reversed 'e'.)

This indefinite sound is very common in ordinary speech, and most unaccented syllables have it, or a variety of it. It is the vague sound heard in the italicized syllables of : soda, thorough, granary, ordinary, utmost, bullock, above, idol, able, tailor, labour, collar, dolorous, constable, element.

It would, perhaps, be more accurate to speak of the neutral vowel *sounds*, rather than of the neutral vowel sound ; for this indeterminate sound is not always quite the same with different vowels, or even with the same vowel in different connexions. Indeed, the *Oxford English Dictionary* distinguishes, and assigns separate phonetic symbols to, no less than fifteen 'obscure' vowel-sounds in unstressed syllables, as illustrated by the italicized vowel-letters in the following words : 'amoeba' ; 'accept', 'maniac' ; 'datum' ; 'moment', 'several' ; 'separate' (adj.) ; 'added', 'estate' ; 'vanity' ; 'remain', 'believe' ; 'theory' ; 'violet', 'parody' ; 'authority' ; 'connect', 'amazon' ; 'verdure', 'measure' ; 'altogether' ; 'circular'. In general, these nuances of sound may be classified in two groups : (a) a sound something like a blurred short 'u' ; and (b) what has been called the 'lax short "i"' sound, which occurs specially with the short vowels 'i', 'y' and 'e'. (This does not mean, however, that these vowels in unstressed syllables always have this lax 'i' sound ; in these, for example, the neutral sound is of the blurred 'u' type : *tapir*, *keeper*, *satyr*, *April*, *pencil*, *pupil*, *candle*, *camel* ; in fact the last five of these are pronounced simply with an 'l' sound : 'aiprl', 'pensl', 'peupl', 'kandl', 'kaml').

#### I. *The Neutral vowel, with the blurred 'u' sound.*

The unstressed (italicized) syllables in the words of each of the following lists have much the same neutral sound, in spite of differences in spelling :—

- (a) *schólar*, *wórker*, *tápir*, *táilor*, *múrmur*, *lábour*, *mártýr*, *leisure*, *ámateur*, *china*, *thórough* (all 'ə').
- (b) *gránary*, *óffertory*, *lábourite*, *hónorary*, *óratory*.
- (c) *tídal*, *trável*, *péncil*, *ídol*, *cáreful*, *trávail*, *tróuble* : (all 'əl', or 'l'; e.g. 'pensəl, or 'pensl').
- (d) *séaman*, *risen*, *mótíon*, *stúbborn*, *víllain*, *cóxswain*, *ócean*, *súllen*, *príson* (all 'ən', or even 'n': e.g., 'seemən' or 'seemn', 'prizən' or 'prizn', 'oashən' or 'oashn'; *coxswain* is pronounced 'koksən' or 'koksn').
- (e) *búnkum*, *aútumn*, *ránsom*, *wínsome*, *chásm*, *meérsch-aum* : (all 'əm': e.g. autəm, ransəm).
- (f) *státus*, *fámous*, *tórtoise*, *Chrístmas*, *pálace*, *púrchase*, *lámmas* (all 'əs': e.g. 'taurtəs', 'krisməs').
- (g) *nuisance*, *cóncscience*, *nónsense*, *síxpence*, *súbstance* (all 'ə').
- (h) *abóut*, *aboárd*, *upón*, *omit*, *potáto* ('əbout', 'pətaito').
- (i) *dépéndent*, *dépéndant* ('dəpendənt').
- (j) *principle*, *principal* ('prinsipəl', or '-l').
- (k) *státionary*, *státionery* ('staishənəri').
- (l) *cónstable*, *ádamant*, *ópposite*, *désultory* ('kunstəbəl', 'adəmənt', 'opəzit', 'desəltəri').

# Notes :

1. The slightness of this neutral vowel sound is illustrated by the fact that in words ending in 'l', 'm' and 'n' (like *ídol*, *chásm*, *príson*), the vowel sign can be dispensed with, the final consonant seeming to give all the vowel-sound needed. This is the way in which some words ending in 'sm' are now actually spelt: e.g. *chásm*, *spásm*, *enthúsiásm*, *protoplásm*, *prísm*, *patriotísm*, *rationalísm*, *sophísm*, *theísm*, *deísm*, and all the 'isms'. In the same

way, *idol* could be spelt 'eidl': *risen*, 'rizn'; *chosen*, 'choazn'; *listen*, 'lisn'; *castle*, 'kaasl'; *vassal*, 'vasl'; *hasten*, 'haisn', *often*, 'aufn' or 'ofn'; etc. So 'l', 'm' and 'n' are sometimes called 'Syllabic' consonants.

2. The vowel that is least changed in sound in unstressed syllables is the vowel 'o'. In monologue, synonym, synod, monopoly, amorous, amatory, philosophy, the 'o' in the italicized syllables is the neutral vowel ('monolog', 'sinənim', 'sinəd', 'mənopəli', 'amərus', 'amətəri', 'filosəfi'). In *potato*, the first 'o' is the neutral vowel in ordinary speech; but the final 'o' is nearly long 'o', but not quite. It has the same sound as 'o' in *héro*, which is *not* the full long 'o' we hear in *heróic*—a distinction in sound which the *Oxford English Dictionary* recognizes, and marks with different symbols. Almost the proper short 'o' sound is heard where the 'o' in an unstressed syllable immediately precedes a consonant, as in: *concéit*, *convince*, *compóse*, *colléct*, *oppónent*, *mónologue*. In *overt*, *opíne*, *opínion*, *provide*, the unstressed 'o' is very near the long 'o' sound. For further illustrations, see below.

## 2. The Neutral Vowel with the lax 'i' sound.

The lax 'i' sound is spelt in many different ways. For example—(y): *happy*, *pity*, *holy*, *sorry*, etc.; (e): *women*, *houses*, *before*, *behave*, *algebra*, *covenant*, *covetous*, *elegant*, *vehement*, *implement*; and such words as *simile*, 'strophe', *epitome*, *syncope*, *extempore*, *apostrophe*; (ie): *reverie*, *coterie*, *menagerie*, *prairie*; *ponies*, *lilies*, *series*, *species*; (ey): *barley*, *honey*, *money*, *monkey*; (ay): *Monday*, *Thursday*, etc.; (i): *motive*, *notice*, *profit*, *solid*, *engine*, *granite*, *cabin*, *cavil*, *ánimus*, *pítiful*, *mímícry*.

Note also: *forfeit*, *surfeit*; *minute* (noun); *foreign*; *mischief*; *kerchief*; *carriage*, *marriage* ('marij'); *knowledge* ('nolij'); *guinea*; *circuit*, *conduit* ('kondit'); *kopje* ('kopi'); *Nineveh*; *lettuce*.

The vowels in the unstressed syllables in the words in each of the following lists have the same neutral sound, in spite of differences in spelling :—

- (a) *pónies*, *múses*, *mónkeys*, *Súndays*.
- (b) *sérvice*, *prémise* (noun), *léttuce*, *némesis*.
- (c) *sílly*, *símile*, *bárley*, *práirie*, *gúinea*, *Níneveh*.
- (d) *cóllege*, *knówledge*, *pórridge*, *márriage*, *cábbage*.
- (e) *depósit*, *gránite*, *fórfeit*, *búllet*, *mínute* (noun), *círcuit*.
- (f) *ráncid*, *wórried*, *fórehead* ('forid'), *bléssed*.
- (g) *déarest*, *sóphist*, *ámethyst*.
- (h) *wómen*, *fóreign*, *flórin*, *éngine*.

Note.—In some words the vowel disappears altogether : e.g. *business* ('biznes'); *medicine* (medsən); *venison* ('venzən'); *Salisbury* ('Saulzbəri'). But *benison*, *orison*, *unison*, are pronounced as three syllables ('benizən', 'orizən', eunizən').

The neutral vowel sound is never heard in stressed syllables; but sometimes something like a long or a short vowel sound occurs even in unstressed syllables. This can often be accounted for by a secondary accent. For example, in the word *cónsecrate*, the primary accent is on the first syllable; and yet the 'a' in the third syllable is the long 'a' sound, because there is on that syllable a secondary accent. Other examples of this are *párasite*, *cómplicate*, *ópportúne*, *ótiose*, *díplomàt*, *cálumèt*, *áristocràt*, *interlúde*, *adamántine*, *lássitude*, *ántiquated*, etc. But in some words this double accent explanation does not seem to apply: for example, in *phoétic*, *cháos*, *époch*, the 'o' sound is distinct, though it occurs in unaccented syllables. Other examples are *coérce*, *coesséntial*, *co-óperation*, *coetérnal*, *coalésce*, *pre-émption*, *reórganize*, *reinforce*. From these examples it seems that an unstressed vowel has its proper value when it immediately precedes

another vowel. The vowel 'u', too, often retains the long 'u' sound even in unaccented syllables. It can be heard, for example, in such words as *impudent*, *régular*, *cásual*, *visual*, *úsual*, *mánual*, *sénsual*, *válie*, *virtue*, *virtuous*, *ánnuál*, *perpétual*, *monuméntal*, *crédulous* ('impeudent', 'regeulər', 'kazeuəl', etc.)

### III. PRACTICE

It will help you to catch the sound of the neutral vowel if you say aloud the following pairs of words. Pronounce the words naturally, as you would in ordinary conversation, and listen for the indefinite sounds of the unstressed syllables. The first word of each pair illustrates the neutral vowel sound in the unaccented syllable; the second the full sound of the same vowel when accented.

('a'): *wóman*, *mán*; *husband*, *disbánd*; *mérchant*, *enchánt*; *cóllar*, *debár*; *sóda*, *papá*; *china*, *hurráh*; *nuisance*, *mischánce*; *surface*, *defáce*; *mánage*, *engáge*; *certain*, *attáin*; *cábbage*, *enráge*; *sausage*, *miráge* ('-aazh'); *tribal*, *cabál*; *tidal*, *medállion*; *constable*, *constábulary*; *próbable*, *enáble*; *óffal*, *pál*; *séparate* (adj.), *abáte*; *schólar*, *afár*; *pénance*, *advánce*; *abouit*, *ábbot*; *alóne*, *tálon*; *amóng*, *ámity*; *atóne*, *báton*; *anoint*, *ánnotate*; *arríve*, *ármý*; *asíde*, *ácíd*; *alóud*, *hállowed*; *avoid*, *ávid*; *aménd*, *dámmed*.

('o'): *mótor*, *adóre*; *tailor*, *befóre*; *héro*, *heróic*; *ditto*, *tóe*; *héroes*, *roés*; *fóllowed*, *lówed*; *fúrlough*, *althóugh*; *ídol*, *dóll*; *lábour*, *foir*; *mótion*, *shóne*; *hámmock*, *bemóck*; *hávoc*, *vócatíve*; *hýssop*, *sóp*; *cárrót*, *rót*; *waístcoat* ('-kət'), *coát*; *Eúrope*, *rópe*; *ídíot*, *ídíótic*; *sýnod*, *nód*; *ránsom*, *aplómb*; *búttón*, *tónic*; *hélot*, *allót*; *offícial*, *óffice*; *oppóse*,

*ópposite* ; *mémory*, *memórial* ; *ímpotent*, *pótent* ;  
*ópposite*, *oppóse*.

( ' u ' ) : *múrmur*, *demúr* ; *féature*, *adjúre* ; *lúxury*, *luxúrious* ;  
*úsury*, *usúrious* ; *íncome*, *becóme* ; *cólumn*, *colúm-*  
*nar* ; *sýrup*, *abrupt* ; *húmmuck*, *múck* ; *búnkum*,  
*cúmber*.

( ' e ' ) : *wómen*, *mén* ; *cómmen*t, *cemént* ; *chápel*, *compél* ;  
*cámel*, *repél* ; *décent*, *evént* ; *présen*t (adj.), *présén*t  
(verb) ; *pátien*t, *intént* ; *gármen*t, *prevént* ; *lével*,  
*rebél* (verb) ; *incense* (spice), *incénse* (make angry) ;  
*knówledge*, *lédger* ; *lózenge*, *éngine* ; *bétter*, *detér* ;  
*énten*r, *intér* ; *héifer*, *prefér* ; *ténet*, *coquétte* ; *súdden*,  
*dén* ; *súllen*, *surrén*der ; *prívilege*, *allége* ; *ráven*,  
*revén*ge ; *cóvet*, *corvétte* ; *ánthem*, *thém* ; *ílex*,  
*léxicon* ; *wréched*, *shéd* ; *wéd*ded, *deá*d ; *begó*ne,  
*béckon* ; *beló*w, *béllow* ; *begin*, *bégging* ; *befó*re,  
*beéf*y ; *defér*, *déferen*ce ; *destró*y, *déstiny* ; *relíe*ve,  
*relátive* ; *regrét*, *égret* ; *sedúce*, *sédulous* ; *dený*,  
*dénizen* ; *repén*t, *réptile* ; *élemen*t, *lémon*.

( ' i ' , ' y ' ) : *prófit*, *permit* (verb) ; *crédit*, *admit* ; *tórrid*,  
*forbíd* ; *ácíd*, *acídity* ; *défin*ite, *igní*te ; *disci*pline,  
*declí*ne ; *dóctrine*, *diví*ne ; *péril*, *rill* ; *péncil*, *sílly* ;  
*áctive*, *arrí*ve ; *tónic*, *níck* ; *sérvice*, *deví*ce ; *súrplíce*,  
*políce* ; *prémise* (noun), *deví*se ; *reddí*sh, *dí*sh ;  
*vívíd*, *invídious* ; *árticle*, *articulate* ; *párticle*, *par-*  
*ticular* ; *médícine*, *medicínal*.

Note the neutral ' i ' sound at the end of these words :  
*háppy*, *mér*ry, *sórry*, *búsy*, *sílly*, *fólly*, *válley*, *mónkey*,  
*réverie*, *prairie*, *tópi*, *símile*, *epítome*, *sýncop*e, *apóstrophe*,  
*stúdi*es, *pónies*, *fóllies*, *símiles*, *epítomes*. (Carefully avoid  
giving these the long ' e ' sound—' hapee ', ' soree ',  
' donkee '. ' Aar yeu verree bizee ? ' is not English but  
' chee-chee ' !)



MONOSYLLABLES. Most monosyllables have their full vowel sounds; but some short particles (e.g. *the, a, an, and, to, of, in, on, for, from*) are, in ordinary speech, pronounced with the short neutral vowel sound. The definite article never has the long 'e' sound except (1) before a vowel: e.g. *the ass, the elements* ('dhee' elements), and (2) when emphasized: e.g. 'He is *the* man (i.e. the best or only man) for the job.' Otherwise it has the neutral sound. So with the indefinite article: 'a' has the 'ai' sound only when emphasized: e.g. 'I asked for *a* (i.e. one) book, not half a dozen.' To be emphatic, we may say, 'Put it *on* the table, not under it'; but when not emphasized, *on* and the other particles have an obscure vowel sound.

In this sentence of St Paul's, the prepositions have their full vowel sound (short 'o'), because they are contrasted and so emphasized. 'They went forth *from* us, but they were not *of* us.' (See Chapter IX, Note under 'Unstressed Words in Sentences', pp. 198-9.)

#### IV. SOME TERMINATIONS

How to pronounce certain terminations, or word endings, is often puzzling. In accented syllables, of course, there is no special difficulty, for in such the vowels have their full sounds, long or short (as in *divine, invade, invite, device*). But in unstressed syllables the matter is not so simple; and rules are not of much help, because they are so subject to exceptions.

Unstressed terminations should, of course, have neutral vowel sounds; but many have full vowel sounds owing to a secondary accent (e.g. *turpentine, discriminate*), and some without even this excuse (e.g. *turbine, finite*).

##### I. '-ine'.

###### (a) Nouns:—

- a. Neutral vowel—Lax 'i': *discipline, doctrine, engine, famine, intestine, jasmine, érmine, médecine.*

b. Long 'i' ('ein'): *turbine, chlórine, cármine, sáline, célandine, cólumbine, églantine, pórcupine, túrpentine.*

c. Long 'e' ('een'): *mágazine, márgarine, crinoline, quárantine, támbourine, nícotine, glýcerine, gélatine, strýchnine, sárdine.*

(b) Verbs :—

Neutral sound—Lax 'i': *déstine, imáagine, détérmine, exámine.*

(c) Adjectives :—

a. Neutral—Lax 'i': *másculine, féminine, génuine, ságuine.*

b. Long 'i' ('ein'): *adamántine, sérpentine, canine, féline, pristíne.*

2. '-ite'.

(a) Nouns :—

a. Neutral—Lax 'i': *gránite, hýpocríte, plé<sup>h</sup>iscite.*

b. Long 'i' ('ei'): *dýnamíte, gráphíte, párasíte, sýbaríte.*

(b) Adjectives :—

a. Neutral—Lax 'i': *ópposite, ápposite, exquisíte, défínite, infiníte, fávouríte.*

b. Long 'i' ('ei'): *finíte, récondíte.*

(c) Verbs :—

Long 'i': *expédíte.*

3. '-ice'.

Neutral sound—Lax 'i': *sérvice, prácticé, ávarice, póultice, jústice, cówardice, nótime, nóvice.*

4. '-ive'.

Neutral sound—Lax 'i': *áctive, pássive, cápitive, spórtive, nátime, rélatíve, póssítive.*

## 5. '-ile'.

a. Long 'i' ('ei'): *dócile, ágile, dúctile, fértille, frágitlle, hóstille, puérille, sénille, crócodille, dómicille, éxille, juvénille, sérville.*

b. Long 'e' ('ee'): *imbecille, fáctille* ('-eel').  
(Note *facsimile*, four syllables: 'fak-sím-i-lə'.)

## 6. '-ise', '-ize'.

Long 'i' ('ei'): *páradíse, ádvértíse, cívílíze, órganíze, scrútíníze, fértilíze, réalíze, théoríze.*

Neutral—Lax 'i': *práctise.*

## 7. '-age'.

Neutral: *cóurage, póstage, cábbage, gárbage, hómage, bóndage, méssage, márríage, pílgírmage, víllage, plúmage, fóliage, cóttage, pérsíflage.*

## 8. '-ate'.

## (a) Nouns:—

Neutral: *clímate, éstímate, prédícate, frígate, pálate, préláte, sénate, précípite, móderate, séparate.*

Long 'a' ('ai'): *cándidate, ádvocate, ínítíate.*

## (b) Verbs:—

Long 'a' ('ai'): *éstímate, prédícate, précípitáte, ágitáte, cáptívate, móderáte, stímuláte, créate, séparate, désoláte, délibérate, insínuate.*

## (c) Adjectives:—

Neutral: *delíberate, séparate, privéate, célibate, fórtunate, désolate, áccurate.*

Long 'a' ('ai'): *próstrate, sérrate, précípitáte, vértébrate.*

9. '-ade'.

Long 'a' ('ai'): *cómrade, década, bálustràde, sérenàde, cávalcàde.*

Broad 'a' ('aa'): *prómenàde.*

10. '-acy'.

Neutral: *prívacý, áccuracý, íntrícacý, ádvocacý, íntímácý, óbstínacý.*

11. '-ude'.

Long 'u' ('eu'): *átítúde, plátítúde, lóngítúde, látítúde, áptítúde, múltítúde, sérvítúde, áltítúde.*

12. '-ule'.

Long 'u' ('eu'): *glóbule, píllule, cápsule, nódule.*

13. '-ess'.

Short 'e' ('e'): *sóngstress, poétèss, tígress, líonèss, aúthorèss, waitress.*

14. '-ette'.

Short 'e' ('e'): *státuètte, cigarètte, wággon-ette, brúnètte, étiquètte.*

15. '-ete'.

Long 'e' ('ee'): *óbsolètè, páraclètè.*

16. '-y'.

In Verbs:—

Long 'i' ('ei'): *mágnífý, glórífý, signífý, módífý, térrífý, ámplífý, etc.*

In Adverbs, Adjectives:—

Neutral—Lax 'i': *háppy, sílly, slíly, quíckly, géntly, hóly, etc., etc.*

Most other suffixes are regular in having the neutral vowel sound in unaccented syllables. For example : 'ain' (*captain*), 'ary' (*sólitary*), 'ant', 'ent' (*sérvant, stúdent*), 'ance', 'ence' (*endúrance, présence*), 'ancy', 'ency' (*cóncstancy, régency*), 'mony' (*céremony*), 'ure' (*ágrículture, créáture*), 'eur' (*grándeur*), 'ary' (*library, dictionary*), 'ory' (*fáctory*), 'et' (*pócket, brácelet*), 'ot' (*bállot, fággot*), 'al' (*róyal, égal*), 'ar' (*vúlgar, singlar*), 'ous' (*dángerous, cállous*), 'or', 'our', 'er' (*tútor, sávour, róbber*), etc.

#### V. THE LONG NEUTRAL VOWEL SOUND ('-er')

As has been explained (in Chapter I, Note 2 on p. 14), '-er' in stressed syllables (as in *infér, pérjury*) is not the proper short 'e' sound with '-er' (heard in e.g. *very, merry, péril*), but a peculiar sound which is heard in certain words with all the vowel letters except 'a'. (It is something like the throaty sound which a hesitating speaker makes at intervals in public speaking : 'Mr Chairman, and —er—ladies and gentlemen; it—er—gives me great pleasure to—er—have the—er—great honour', etc.) It has been called the long neutral vowel sound; but it is not the same as the neutral sound (which may be called the short neutral vowel sound); and it differs from that in the fact that it occurs only in stressed, and never in unstressed syllables (whereas the short neutral sound is confined to unstressed syllables).

Say the following groups of words aloud, and hear how the vowel sound is the same in all, in spite of the fact that the vowel letters are different : '-er', '-ir', '-yr', '-ur', '-ear' and, in some words '-or' and '-our', all riming perfectly.

*infér, érr, fír, mýrrh, fúr, wór(thy).*

*hèrd, heárd, bírd, absúrd, wórd.*

*térse, heárse, nírse, wórse.*

*mérle, eárl, gírl, fúrl, wórl(d).*

*inért, dírt, hárt, wórt.*  
*jérk, ír, lúrk, wórk.*  
*érs, fírs, búrs, wórs.*  
*eárh, Pérh, mírh, wórh.*  
*pérch, bírch, lúrch, seárch, wórsh(ɪp).*  
*mýrtle, kírtle, túrtle, wórtle(berry).*  
*verge, urge, scourge.*

(Note also these words in ‘-our’: *journey* (‘jerni’),  
*journal, courtesy, adjourn.*)

Practise saying aloud these pairs of words, to get the difference between the short neutral ‘-er’ sound in unstressed syllables, and the long neutral ‘-er’ sound in stressed syllables: *wíther, intér*; *móther, infér*; *wíthered, inférréd*; *cóncert, inért*; *sóuthern, intérn*; *cónverse* (noun), *convérse* (verb); *cónvert* (noun), *convért* (verb).

And practise saying aloud these pairs, to get the difference between the long neutral ‘-er’ sound and the short ‘e’ sound with ‘-r’: *érring* (neutral), *hérring* (short ‘e’); *hér, véry*; *érr, mérry*; *pér, péril*; *érréd, férried*; *húrt, mért*; *pérch, pérish*.

#### VI. CHANGES IN VOWEL SOUNDS DUE TO CHANGES OF ACCENT

It being the case that the same vowel letters have different sounds in stressed and unstressed syllables, it follows that a shifting of accent will cause a change in vowel sounds. When in a derivative the accent is shifted, it will bring out (as heat brings out invisible ink) the proper sound of the vowel in the syllable on which it falls. The accent moving from syllable to syllable in derivatives may be compared to a spotlight moved about from one object to another in a darkened room. The objects on which the spotlight falls in turn shine out bright and distinct, while the rest remain in the shadow; and in like manner, the vowel in the syllable on which the accent falls speaks out

with its full vowel sound, while the rest remain neutral and indefinite. Take again the word *photograph* and its derivatives. In *phótophraph* the accent falls on the first syllable, and brings out the full sound of the long 'o', while the vowels in the other two syllables remain neutral; but in *photógrapher*, the spotlight has shifted and now falls on the second syllable, and its vowel becomes a clear and distinct short 'o', while the 'o' of the first syllable fades into an obscure sound; finally, in *photográphic*, the accent lights up the third syllable, and brings out the clear short 'a' sound, while the other two syllable sounds are indefinite.

This shifting of accent changes—1, neutral to long vowels; 2, neutral to short vowels; 3, long vowels to neutral; and 4, short vowels to neutral.

#### Examples :

1. Neutral to long : *dóctrine*, but *doctrínal* ; *mémory*, but *memóriá* ; *ántiquary*, but *antiquárián* ; *discipline*, but *disciplínary* ; *órator*, but *oratórical* ; *úniform*, but *unifórmetry* ; *vários*, but *variéty* ; *intéstine*, but *intestínal* ; *séparate* (adj.), but *separátion* ; *líbrary*, but *librárian*.
2. Neutral to short : *spéctacle*, but *spectácular* ; *móment*, but *moméntous* ; *sólid*, but *solidity* ; *rápíd*, but *rapídity* ; *cállous*, but *callósity* ; *stómach*, but *stomáchic* ; *pátriot*, but *patriótíc* ; *týrant*, but *tyránnical* ; *médicine*, but *medicínal* ; *dráma*, but *dramátic* ; *illustrate*, but *illústrative* ; *índicate*, but *indicative* ; *áncesor*, but *ancéstral* ; *cóntroversy*, but *controvérsial* ; *málice*, but *malicious* ; *ócean*, but *océánic* ; *phótophraph*, but *photográphic*.
3. Long to neutral : *pótent*, but *impotent* ; *fínite*, but *infínite* ; *fámous*, but *infamous* ; *oppóse*, but *oppositíon* ; *condóle*, but *cóndolence* ; *repúte*, but *réputable* ; *coincide*, but *coincidencé* ; *chastíse*, but *chástisement* ; *cýcle*, but *bícycle* ; *ádvértise*, but *advértisement* ;

*spontaneous*, but *spontaneity*; *pathos*, but *pathetic*; *prépare*, but *préparation*; *répáir*, but *réparation*; *pious*, but *impious*; *oblige*, but *obligation*.

4. Short to neutral: *miscellany*, but *miscellaneous*; *mental*, but *mentality*; *gelatine*, but *gelatinous*; *gentle*, but *gentility*; *clement*, but *clemental*; *history*, but *historical*; *opposite*, but *opposition*; *office*, but *official*.

## VII. CHANGES IN VOWEL SOUNDS WITHOUT CHANGE OF ACCENT

The above changes in vowel sounds are due to the shifting of the accent; but there are many instances of vowel changes in derivatives even where the accent remains on the same syllable. For example, *nátion* is accented on the first syllable, and so in *nátional*, the adjective derived from it; yet the 'a' in *nation* is long, and the 'a' in *national* is short. In the same way, the long 'i' sound in the first (stressed) syllable of *týrant* becomes short 'i' in the first (stressed) syllable of its derivative *týranny*.

Examples:

1. Long 'a' changing to short 'a': *nátion*, but *nátional*; *náture*, but *nátural*; *compáre*, but *compárative*; *decláim*, but *declámatory*; *sháde*, but *sháadow*; *cháste*, but *chástity*; *vále*, but *válley*; *prépáre*, but *prépáratory*; *gráde*, but *grádual*; *pátron*, but *pátronage*; *Spáin*, but *Spánish*; *expláin*, but *explánatory*.
2. Long 'i' to short 'i': *prime*, but *primitíve*; *týrant*, but *týranny*; *týpe*, but *týpical*; *crime*, but *críminál*; *víne*, but *vínegar*; *wise*, but *wísdóm*; *deríve*, but *derívatíve*; *prívaté*, but *prívatíty*; *Chríst*, but *Chrístían* and *Chrístmas*; *wíde*, but *wídtíth*; *divíde*, but *divísíon*; *sígn*, but *sígnatúre*.



3. Long 'e' to short 'e': *austère*, but *austérité*; *severe*, but *sevérité*; *conceive*, but *conception*; *deceive*, but *décéption*; *receive*, but *recéption*.
4. Long 'o' to short 'o': *mediocre*, but *mediocrity*; *verbose*, but *verbócity*; *jocose*, but *jocócity*.

#### VIII. CHANGE OF ACCENT MARKING CHANGE IN PARTS OF SPEECH

There are a number of words which are accented differently as nouns and verbs, nouns and adjectives, and adjectives and verbs. The word is spelt the same as verb and as noun, but the accent falls on its first syllable when it is a noun, and on its second when it is a verb. For example, when *conduct* is a noun, it is pronounced *cónduct*; when it is a verb, it is pronounced *conduct*. So, *absent* is the adjective, and *absént* the verb; and *expert* is the noun, and *expért* the adjective. Here is the list:—

Noun	Verb	Noun	Verb
<i>abstract</i>	<i>abstráct</i>	<i>cónverse</i>	<i>convérse</i>
<i>accent</i>	<i>accént</i>	<i>cónvert</i>	<i>convért</i>
<i>affix</i>	<i>affix</i>	<i>cónvict</i>	<i>convict</i>
<i>attribute</i>	<i>attribúte</i>	<i>cónvoy</i>	<i>convóy</i>
<i>augment</i>	<i>augmént</i>	<i>décrease</i>	<i>decreáse</i>
<i>collect</i>	<i>colléct</i>	<i>défile</i>	<i>defile</i>
<i>commune</i>	<i>commúne</i>	<i>déscant</i>	<i>descánt</i>
<i>compress</i>	<i>compréss</i>	<i>désert</i>	<i>desért</i>
<i>concert</i>	<i>concért</i>	<i>digest</i>	<i>digést</i>
<i>conduct</i>	<i>conduct</i>	<i>discount</i>	<i>discoúnt</i>
<i>confine</i>	<i>confine</i>	<i>escort</i>	<i>escórt</i>
<i>conflict</i>	<i>conflict</i>	<i>essay</i>	<i>essáy</i>
<i>conserve</i>	<i>consérve</i>	<i>exile</i>	<i>exíle</i>
<i>consort</i>	<i>consórt</i>	<i>export</i>	<i>expórt</i>
<i>contest</i>	<i>contést</i>	<i>extract</i>	<i>extráct</i>
<i>contract</i>	<i>contráct</i>	<i>ferment</i>	<i>fermént</i>
<i>contrast</i>	<i>contrást</i>	<i>import</i>	<i>impórt</i>

Noun	Verb	Noun	Verb
<i>impress</i>	<i>impréss</i>	<i>prógress</i>	<i>progréss</i>
<i>incense</i>	<i>incénse</i>	<i>próject</i>	<i>proyéct</i>
<i>increase</i>	<i>increáse</i>	<i>prótest</i>	<i>protést</i>
<i>insult</i>	<i>insúlt</i>	<i>rébel</i>	<i>rebél</i>
<i>object</i>	<i>objéct</i>	<i>récord</i>	<i>recórd</i>
<i>perfume</i>	<i>perfúme</i>	<i>réfuse (s)</i>	<i>refúse (z)</i>
<i>permit</i>	<i>permit</i>	<i>rétail</i>	<i>retáil</i>
<i>pervert</i>	<i>pervért</i>	<i>subject</i>	<i>subjéct</i>
<i>prefix</i>	<i>prefíx</i>	<i>survey</i>	<i>survéy</i>
<i>prelude</i>	<i>prelúde</i>	<i>tórmént</i>	<i>tormént</i>
<i>premise (s)</i>	<i>premise (z)</i>	<i>tránsfer</i>	<i>transfér</i>
<i>présage</i>	<i>preságe</i>	<i>tránsport</i>	<i>transpórt</i>
<i>présent</i>	<i>présént</i>	<i>úndress</i>	<i>undréss</i>
<i>produce</i>	<i>prodúce</i>	<i>úpsét</i>	<i>upsét</i>
Adjective	Verb	Adjective	Verb
<i>ábsent</i>	<i>absént</i>	<i>fréquent</i>	<i>frequént</i>
<i>alternáte</i>	<i>alternáte</i>	<i>consummate</i>	<i>consummáte</i>
Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective
<i>Augúst</i>	<i>augúst</i>	<i>minute</i>	<i>minúte</i>
<i>cómpact</i>	<i>compáct</i>	<i>précedent</i>	<i>precédent</i>
<i>éxpert</i>	<i>expért</i>	<i>súpine</i>	<i>supíne</i>
<i>instínt</i>	<i>instínt</i>	<i>invalid</i>	<i>inválid</i>

# Notes :

1. In all these words there is a change of vowel sounds with the change of accent : e.g. in the noun *défile*, the first syllable has the long 'e' sound, but in the verb it has the neutral sound ; in the noun *prémise*, the first syllable has short 'e' and the second the neutral sound ('premis'), but in the verb the first is long 'e' and the second long 'i' ('premeiz'). Note also *minute*, which as a noun is 'minit' and as an adjective is 'meinéut' (long 'i' and long 'u'). So with *invalid*, the noun is 'invæled', and the adjective 'inváled'.

2. In some words a difference in accent marks a difference in meaning :—

e.g. : *cónjure* ( ' kúnjər ' )—to juggle.

*conjure* ( ' kúnjeúr ' )—to implore, put on oath.

*gállant* ( ' gálənt ' )—brave.

*gallánt* ( ' gəlánt ' )—courteous.

3. In some words there is no change of accent in the different parts of speech :—

e.g. : Nouns and verbs : *assáy*, *cómmənt*, *consént*,  
*respéct*, *suppórt*.

Adjectives and nouns : *cóncrete*, *pátent*.

Adjective and verb : *exáct*.

Adjective, noun and verb : *contént*. (But,  
*cóntents*.)

## CHAPTER IV

### VOWEL SOUNDS AND VOWEL SIGNS

WE have now reviewed all the vowel signs (letters and digraphs), and have realized how inconsistent English spelling is with the phonetic principle of 'one vowel sign, one vowel sound'. Let us now reverse the process, and consider in order the vowel sounds and the variety of vowel signs used to represent each. This will further convince us that English spelling is just as inconsistent with the complementary phonetic principle, 'one vowel sound, one vowel sign'. For, just as each sign is used for more than one sound, so each sound makes use of more than one sign.

The following tables give the various vowel sounds, and under each the various vowel signs used to represent it.

#### (1) Short 'a' sound ('a').

1. 'a': as in *rabbit, madden, chaffer, ragged, cadge, racket, valley, hammer, fan, sand, rant, apple, chatter, attach, married, navy, lax, darling, rang, rank, lapsed, tarry* (wait), *marriage, harry*.
2. Odd words: *laugh* ('lai'), *plaid* ('plaid'), *plait* ('plat'), *salmon* ('samən'). (For *laugh*, see p. 11, Note 3.)  
(One sign for short 'a' sound; or, counting odd words, four.)

#### (2) Long 'a' sound ('ai').

1. 'a': as in *table, lady, lading, pagan, taking, cadence, aging, scaly, tamer, ranger, capable, hasten, patent, navy, lazy, nation, education*.

Also with following mute 'e': *parade, safe, page, male, lame, sane, ape, chase, mate, bathe, ache, sake, save, change, paste.*

2. 'ai': as in *ail, maiden, tailor, drain, aim, waif, praise, bait, paint, maize, attained, waist, faith.*
3. 'ay': as in *bray, dray, crayon, affray, gay, lay, may, nay, praying, ray, saying, betray, away, betrayed, jay, bayonet.*
4. 'ey': as in *obey, dey, fey, grey, convey, surveyor, abeyance, whey, they, prey, conveyance.*
5. 'ei': as in *veil, vein, reins, feint, obeisance, heinous, reindeer, inveigle, reign, feign, deign, weigh, sleigh, inveigh, neighbour, weight.*
6. 'ea': in *great, break, steak, yea.*
7. Odd words: *straight, campaign, champagne, gauge, gaol, dahlia, halfpenny* ('haipni'), *maelstrom, demesne.*

(Six signs for the long 'a' sound; or, counting odd words, fifteen.)

### (3) Sound of long 'a' with 'r' ('-aer').

1. 'a' with '-re': as in *blare, flare, dare, glare, mare, pare, rare, snare, stare, scare, spare, tares, aware*; and with '-r': *vary, chary, wary, daring, Mary, faring, glaring, caring, varying, staring.*
2. 'ai' with 'r': as in *fair, hair, lair, pair, stairs, air, chair.*
3. 'ea' with 'r': in *bear, pear, wear, tear* (rend).
4. 'e' with '-re': in *there, where, ere, e'er, ne'er.*
5. 'ae' with '-r': as in *aerodrome, aeronaut, aeroplane, faerie.*
6. 'ay' with '-r': in *prayer, mayor, Ay.*
7. 'ei' with 'r': in *their, heir, heiress, heirloom.*

(Seven signs for the sound of long 'a' with 'r'.)

## (4) Broad 'a' sound ('aa').

1. 'a': as in *father, rather, bath, path, drama, demand, command, remand, zenana, mammá, papá, tomato, cantáta, sonata, spa, Rajah, can't, (past, grass, grant* : see p. 11, Note 3).
2. 'ah': as in *ah !, bah !, pah !, hurrah !* (exclamations).
3. 'aa': as in *kraal, bazaar*.
4. 'a' with 'r': as in *bar, car, far, mar, par, star, scar, tar, Tsar, large, arch, garth, harsh, starry, tarry* (smeared with tar), *marl, cart, hard, park, scarf, carve, barred, target, armaments, army, farming, darned, argument, parliament*.
5. 'a' with mute 'l': as in *calm, calf, palm, balm, psalm, calmer, psalmist, balmy, calves, half, halves*.
6. 'a' with following mute 'e': as in (French words) *morale, vase, charade, garage, mirage, promenade, pomade* ('-aal', '-aaz', '-aad', '-aazh').
7. 'ea' with 'r': in *heart, hearth, hearken* ('haart').
8. 'e' with 'r': in *clerk, sergeant, Derby, Hertford* ('klaark') ('Haarford').
9. 'oir' (French loan words): *memoir, reservoir, repertoire* ('memwaar', 'resəvwaar', 'repətwaar').
10. Odd words: *aunt* ('aant'), *eclat* ('aiklaa'), *laugh, draught* (see p. 11, Note 3).

(Nine signs for the broad 'a' sound ; or, counting odd words, twelve.)

## (5) Short 'e' sound ('e').

1. 'e': as in *web, fed, egotist, bell, beckon, wedge, gem, hen, sent, avenge, leper, kept, guess, west, vest, blessed, petted, never, every, vexed, next, fez, etched, method, together, length, very, merry, référence*.
2. 'ea': as in *ready, meadow, deafness, meant, dreamt, weapon, leapt, breast, threat, pleasant, breath, heaven, wealth, healthy, heavy, dealt*.

3. 'ei': in *leisure*, *heifer* ('lezhər').
4. 'ai': in *said*, *saith* ('sed', 'seth').
5. 'eo': in *leopard*, *jeopardy* ('lepərd', 'jepərdi').
6. 'a': in *many*, *any*, *anything*, *anyone*, *Thames* ('meni', 'temz').
7. Odd words: *friend*, *bury* (*burial*), *says* ('frend', 'berri', 'sez'), *phlegm*, *guest*, *Ætina*, *reynard* ('renard').

(Six signs for the short 'e' sound; or, counting odd words, thirteen.)

(6) Long 'e' sound ('ee').

1. 'e': as in *we*, *he*, *she*, *be*, *being*, *lenient*, *venal*, *region*, *mediate*, *tedious*, *genus*, *species*, *plenary*, *previous*, *reorganize*, *deism*, *vehicle*, *vehement*; and with mute 'e' after following consonant: *concede*, *glebe*, *mete*, *theme*, *eke*, *serene*, *here*, *mere*, *sere*, *precede*, *replete*, *impede*.
2. 'ee': as in *bee*, *fee*, *lee*, *kneel*, *feel*, *peel*, *seem*, *been*, *meet*, *geese*, *reeve*, *breeze*, *sweep*, *breed*, *cheese*, *beer*, *veer*, *seer*, *freedom*, *beech*, *teeth*, *reek*.
3. 'ea': as in *sea*, *pea*, *lea*, *peace*, *plead*, *leaf*, *eager*, *beak*, *sealed*, *beam*, *dean*, *leap*, *ease*, *cease*, *beat*, *breathe*, *wreath*, *heave*, *each*, *feast*, *appear*, *cleared*, *dreary*, *fear*, *endearing*.
4. 'ie': as in *brief*, *chiefly*, *liege*, *fiend*, *priest*, *field*, *siege*, *belief*, *relieve*, *grieved*, *niece*, *fierce*, *pierced*, *tier*, *retrieved*.
5. 'ei': as in *seize*, *conceit*, *deceive*, *receipt*, *neither*, *either*, *weir*, *weird*.
6. 'ae': as in *aeon*, *aesthete*, *anaemia*, *Caesar*.
7. 'i': as in *machine*, *marine*, *police*, *unique*, *pique*, *intrigue*, *ravine*, *antique*, *strychnine*, *quinine*, *imbecile*, *invalid* (noun), *elite* ('aileet').
8. Odd words: *key*, *quay*, *people*, *theory* ('kee', 'kee', 'peepl', 'theeri').

(Note.—*theory*, like *theorem*, is strictly three syllables—‘thee-o-ri’; but it is usually pronounced as two—‘theeri’).

(Seven signs for long ‘e’ sound; or, counting odd words, eleven.)

(7) Short ‘i’ sound (‘i’).

1. ‘i’: as in *rib, ribbed, skid, skidding, tiff, lift, gig, rigging, midget, fill, silly, him, dimly, sin, mint, inch, invincible, risen, miss, fist, risk, lisping, lip, slipped, insipid, sit, mittens, glittering, vivid, living, string, bringing, linger, stink, sinking, rich, pith, timidity, is.*
2. ‘y’: as in *lynch, lynx, mythical, mystic, nymph, symbol, sympathize, lyric, hymn.*
3. ‘ui’: as in *guild, guilded, build, built, guitar, guinea, guillotine.*
4. Odd words: *busy, business; pretty; women; breeches; English; give, live; sieve* (‘bizi’, ‘priti’, ‘wimən’, ‘brichəz’, ‘Ingglis’, ‘siv’).

(Three signs for the short ‘i’ sound; or, counting odd words, ten.)

(8) Long ‘i’ sound (‘ei’).

1. ‘i’: as in *tribal, tidal, siphon, rifle, migrate, liking, pilot, timing, simony, lining, bind, child, viper, tiring, rising, title, arriving, prizing, violent, defiant, pliable, idol, silent, iron, siren, miry;*  
and ‘i’ with following mute ‘e’: *gibe, glide, life, oblige, mile, mine, crime, wipe, wire, wise, bite, alive, prize, lithe.*
2. ‘i’ with mute ‘g’: as in *sign, malign, condign, assign.*
3. ‘i’ with mute ‘gh’: as in *high, sigh, nigh, night, knight, fight, light, frighten, brighter.*
4. ‘y’: as in *style, pylon, tyre, tyrant, pyre, cry, by, sky, why, fry, rhyme, gyrate, gyves.*



5. 'ie': as in *die, lie, pie, vie, flies, cried, died, tried, espied, defied, replied, hierarchy*.
6. 'ei': as in *height, sleight, eider-duck, gneiss, (either, neither)*.
7. 'ui': as in *guide, guile, guise, beguile*.
8. 'uy': in *buy, guy, buyer, guyed*.
9. Odd words: *eye, eyed; isle, island; aisle; rye; choir; indict* ('ei', 'eid', 'eil', 'eiland', 'eil', 'rei', 'kweir', 'indeit').

(Eight signs for the long 'i' sound; or, counting odd words, fourteen.)

(9) Short 'o' sound ('o').

1. 'o': as in *job, nod, off, log, lodge, knock, holly, promise, con, honour, hop, boss, lot, hover, box, song, thronging, honk, scotch, bosh, bomb, throstle, etc.*
2. 'a': as in *what, want, swan, wallow, was, wasp, wash, watch, quantity, quality, quarrel, squat, wander* ('hwot', 'wont', 'swon', etc.).
3. 'au': as in *sausage, laurel, cauliflower*. ('sosi', 'loral', 'koliflour').
4. Odd words: *knowledge, gone, hough* (also spelt *hock*), *yacht* ('nolij', 'gon', 'hok', 'yot').

(Three signs for short 'o' sound; or, counting odd words, seven.)

(10) Long 'o' sound ('oa').

1. 'o': as in *go, no, so, polo, proem, poet, heroic, solo, bold, hold, cold, holy, toll, rolling, gold, soda, gross, grocer, host, most, poster, coincide, folk, yolk*; and with mute 'e' after following consonant: *lobe, rode, hole, poke, tone, home, rope, rose, cote, wove, whole, globe, robe, code, mole*.

2. 'oa': as in *road, loaf, oak, coal, loam, loan, soap, boast, roast, boat, stoat, loaves, coax, oath, loathe, coach, encroaching, approach.*
3. 'ow': as in *blow, flow, grown, growth, glow, slow, snow, stowing, showed, throw, bowl, bow (tie), row (a boat), sow (plant seeds), mower.*
4. 'oe': as in *toe, roe, doe, sloe, ice-floe, toeing.*
5. 'ou': as in *soul, mould, mouldy, shoulder, though, dough.* ('soal', 'moald', etc.).
6. Odd words: *sew, shew; brooch; yeoman* (and French: *beau, mauve, dépôt*) ('soa', 'shoa', 'broach', 'yoamæn', 'boa', 'moav', 'depoa').

(Five signs for long 'o' sound; or, counting odd words, eight; or, with French words, eleven.)

#### (II) Short 'u' sound ('u').

1. 'u': as in *rub, lubber, fuddled, cuff, stuffy, hug, luck, plucked, lull, dulled, rum, bun, hunt, cup, upper, supping, us, fussy, hut, muttered, flux, buzz, drudge, much, lunch, crutch, rusty, lungs, lunged, plunge, drunk, sunken.*
2. 'ou': as in *touch, cousin, trouble, double, country, courage, southern, young, rough, tough* ('tuch', etc.).
3. 'o': as in *cover, mother, brother, other, another, come, some, ton, son, love, dove, glove, front, doth, one, once, monk, monkey, mongrel, comfort, company, comely, stomach, constable* ('kuver', etc.).
4. 'oo': in *flood, blood* ('-ud').
5. Odd words: *does* ('duz'), *twopence* ('tupens').

(Four signs for the short 'u' sound; or, counting odd words, six.)

#### (I2) Long 'u' sound ('eu').

1. 'u': as in *tube, tubular, exude, nude, refuge, duke, ducal, fuel, tulip, presume, illumine, tuneful, pupil,*

*impurity, cure, lure, lurid, muse, mute, acute, execute, execution, regular, genuine, usual, annual.*

2. 'ue': as in *due, rue, hue, sue, value, virtue, imbue, endue, issue, spue.*
3. 'eu': as in *feud, neutral, eunuch, neuter, eulogy, euphony, pneumonia, pseudonym.*
4. 'ew': as in *dew, few, mew, new, pew, askew, stew, steward, yew-tree, renewal, sinew, dewy, hewing, newt.*
5. 'ui': as in *suit, nuisance, pursuit, unsuited.*
6. Odd words: *view, lieu, beauty, impugn, you* ('veu', 'leu', 'beuti', 'impeun', 'yeu').

(Five signs for long 'u' sound; or, counting odd words, ten.)

### (13) The 'oo' sound ('oo').

1. 'oo': as in *mood, food, fool, pool, room, gloom, soon, boon, coop, moor, boor, spoor, ooze, moot, groove, hooves, trooping, cooled, gloomy, boorish, moody, foolish*; and with the shorter 'oo' sound in *good, hood, foot, soot.*
2. 'ou': as in *soup, croup, group, through, route, joust, ghoul, uncouth* ('soop', etc.), *accoutre.*  
Short 'oo': *should* ('shūd'), *would, could, courier.*
3. 'o': as in *do, to, two, who, whom, whose, move, prove, womb, tomb, lose* ('doo', etc.).  
Short 'oo': *woman* ('wūmən'), *bosom, wolf, wolves.*
4. 'u': as in *truth, rude, rule, plume, prune, lute, flute, brute, lunar, prudent, fluent, lucre, ruse, delude, salute, dilute, ludicrous* ('trooth', etc.).  
Short 'oo': *'full* ('fūl'), *bull, pull, pulley, sugar, fulsome.*
5. 'ue': as in *blue, true, glue, clue* ('troo', etc.).
6. 'ui': as in *sluice, juice, cruise, bruise, fruit, recruit, ('sloos', etc.).*

7. 'ew': as in *grew, chew, blew, flew, jewel* ('groo', etc.).
8. Odd words: *shoe, canoe, stoep; manoeuvre* ('shoo', etc.).

(Seven signs for the 'oo' sound; or, counting odd words, nine.)

(14) The 'aw' sound ('au').

1. 'au': as in *daub, fraud, auger, haul, taunt, vaunted, pause, taut, author, gauze, bauble, saunter, audacity, audience, auditor, laud, laudible*.
2. 'augh': as in *caught, taught, aught, daughter, naughty*.
3. 'aw': as in *awe, caw, drawl, draw, flaw, jaw, law, maw, gnaw, paw, saw, straw, paren, prawn, lawn, spawn, sawn, brawl, sprawl, jackdaw, awkward*.
4. 'ough': as in *ought, nought, bought, fought, sought, wrought*.
5. 'al':
  - (a) '-all': as in *ball, call, fall, gall, hall, pall, appalling, stall, squall, squally, wall*.
  - (b) '-alk': as in *balked, chalk, chalky, stalk, talk, walk, walking*.
  - (c) '-al': as in *appal, walnut, walrus, also, almost, bald, scald, scalding*.
6. 'ar': as in *war, ward, warden, warble, warm, warn, warp, wart, swarthy, wharf, dwarf, sward, warlock, quart, quarter, quartz*.
7. '-or': as in *or, orb, order, organ, orgy, pork, form, torn, torpid, corse, port, bore, sore, score, more, torch, north, gorge, orphan*.
8. '-oar': as in *boar, board, hoary, soar, oar, roar, roared*.
9. '-our': as in *pour, pouring, court, courtier, four, fourteen*.
10. '-oor': in *door, floor* ('daur', 'flaur').

II. Odd words : *broad, water, toward* ('braud', 'wautər', 'taurd').

(Ten signs for the 'aw' sound ; or, if odd words are counted, thirteen.)

(I5) The 'ou' sound ('ou').

1. 'ou' : as in *loud, cloud, foul, round, sound, ground, rouse, carouse, sour, lousing, house, mouse, rout, touting, pout, trout, trousers, flour, ounce, pounce, pouch, mountain, plough, snout, doughty, doubt*.

2. 'ow' : as in *cow, bow (bend), brow, allow, now, how, vow, crowd, cowl, crown, drown, owl, howl, fowl, power, tower, cower, bowels, town, sow (pig)*.

Odd word : *mauser* (gun) ('mouzer').

(Two signs for the 'ou' sound, or, counting the odd word, three.)

(I6) The 'oi' sound ('oi').

1. 'oi' : as in *avoid, coif, oil, boiler, toil, soiled, embroiled, coin, coinage, anoint, point, appointed, noise, poise, moist, joist, hoist, choice, rejoice*.

2. 'oy' : as in *boy, coy, cloying, ahoy!, enjoyed, alloy, annoy, employer, royal, joyous, toy, voyage, destroyer*.

3. Odd words : *buoy, coign* ('boi', 'koin').

(Two signs for the 'oi' sound ; or, counting the odd words, four.)

(I7) The long neutral vowel sound (in stressed syllables).

1. '-er' : as in *her, err, erring, infer, inter, aver, herb, herd, serf, serge, perky, merle, term, terminal, interned, fern, stern, verse, terse, inert, pert, nerve, erred, perch, Perth*.

2. '-ir' : as in *fir, stir, bird, third, irk, whirl, firm, flirt, girl, girlish, first, thirty, mirth, girth, birth, kirtle, squirm, girdle, circle, sir, twirl, whirr, thirst*.

3. ' -ur ' : as in *fur, surf, surge, urgent, absurd, hurdle, curdle, purge, murder, burn, turning, furnish, burnish, lurk, murky, curled, purr, cur, curse, nurse, burst, hurt, curve, turtle, church, lurch.*
4. ' -or ' : as in *word, work, worth, worthy, worship, world, worse, worst, wort, worm, whortleberry, attorney.*
5. ' -ear ' : as in *heard, hearse, earl, earth, search, dearth, yearn, earn, earnest, learning.*
6. ' -yr ' : as in *myrrh, myrile, fyrd, myrmidon.*
7. ' -our ' : as in *journey, journal, scourge, courtesy, adjourn.*

(Seven signs for the long neutral vowel sound.)

(18) **The short neutral vowel sounds** (in unstressed syllables).

For examples of the spellings of these sounds (and their name is legion), see the list of different spellings of the vowel sounds at the end of this chapter.

The foregoing analysis shows that, with the exception of the short 'a' sound, no vowel sound in English observes the phonetic rule, 'one sound, one sign'. Each sound uses at least two signs, and some of them use as many as eight, nine, and ten. Indeed, if we reckon the odd and exceptional words, the number of signs to one sound rises to thirteen, fourteen, and even fifteen! No wonder English spelling is such a puzzling problem!

In the following summary, the number of signs for each vowel sound is given. (The figures given in brackets denote the total number in each case if odd words are counted.)

- (a) short 'a' : 1 sign (4).
- (b) 'ou' and 'oi' : 2 signs each (3 and 4 respectively).
- (c) short 'o' and short 'i' : 3 signs each (7 and 10 respectively).
- (d) short 'u' : 4 signs (6).

- (e) long 'u' and long 'o': 5 signs each (10 and 11 respectively).
- (f) short 'e' and long 'a': 6 signs each (13 and 15 respectively).
- (g) long 'a' with 'r', 'oo', long 'e', and long neutral: 7 signs each (7, 9, 11 and 7 respectively).
- (h) long 'i': 8 signs (14).
- (i) broad 'a': 9 signs (11).
- (j) 'au': 10 signs (13).

The following table gives the various spellings of the vowel sounds at a glance.

#### SPELLINGS OF THE VOWEL SOUNDS

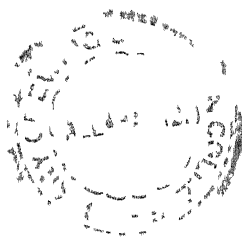
1. short 'a': *mad, plaid, salmon, have, laugh* (see p. 11, Note 3).
2. long 'a': *fatal, fate, fail, play, campaign, straight, vein, they, reign, weigh, steak, gaol, gauge, dahlia, demesne, halfpenny* ('haipni'); (French words: *fête, conjé, ballet, champagne*).
3. long 'a' with '-r': *bare, chary, air, bear, heir, there, prayer, mayor, e'er*.
4. broad 'a': *father, palm, hurrah, part, heart, clerk, aunt, laugh* (see p. 11, Note 3); (French words: *vase, éclat*).
5. short 'e': *bed, head, any, said, says, leisure, leopard, friend, bury, Thames, ate* (also pronounced 'ait').
6. long 'e': *we, mete, been, reach, field, seize, key, Caesar, police, invalid* (noun), *quay, people*.
7. short 'i': *him, myth, pretty, live, guinea, women, busy, breeches, sieve, England*.
8. long 'i': *pilot, cry, thine, tyre, sign, high, height, die, rye, isle, island, aisle, choir, indict, eye, I*.

9. short 'o': *hot, gone, what, laurel, knowledge, yacht, hough* ('hok'), *bomb, sausage*.
10. long 'o': *no, note, both, old, toad, toe, dough, mow, brooch, oh!*, *yeoman, shew, soul*; (French: *dépôt, beau, mauve*).
11. short 'u': *shut, son, blood, does, dove, twopence* ('tupens'), *rough* ('ruf').
12. long 'u': *duty, tune, due, suit, few, feud, lieu, view, impugn, you, beauty*.
13. long 'oo': *fool, tomb, shoe, move, soup, through, blue, rude, truth, manoeuvre, fruit, rheum, flew, leeward* ('looerd').
14. short 'oo': *wood, full, should, wolf*.
15. 'au': *fraud, law, tall, talk, broad, aught, ought, more, pour, lord, war, water, floor, almost, roar*.
16. 'ou': *loud, down, plough*; (German: *mauser* (gun)).
17. 'oi': *boil, boy, buoy, coign*.
18. long neutral: '-er' in stressed syllables: *infér, err, fir, fur, myrrh, word, heard, stirred, blurred, colonel* ('kernəl'), *adjourn*.
19. Short neutral sounds in unstressed syllables: *soda, woman, husband, servant, instance, tribal, collar, surface, constable, paragraph, among, about, avoid, epitome, camel, able, mended, sudden, wither, centre, withered, college, knowledge, foxes, lozenge, garment, presence, covet, element, elegy, become, begin, event, methinks, solemn, tonic, pity, reverie, barley, Sunday, guinea, profit, surfeit, definite, minute* (noun), *circuit, medicine, foreign, mischief, rancid, ponies, service, martyr, nemesis, marriage, lettuce, pencil, pensive, hero, thorough, idol, bunkum, column, motion, button, Europe, sailor, labour, murmur, pleasure, nature, cupboard, comfort, lotus, famous, precious, tortoise*,



carrot, waistcoat, hammock, meerschaum, carol, chasm, prism, sophism, havoc, omit, official, memory, desultory impotent, ransom, opposite, synod, symbol, about, alone, avoid, aboard, alive, inert, inactive, indeed, omit, overt, unless, below, believe.

(Note that the short neutral vowel sound *never* occurs in stressed, and the long neutral vowel sound *never* occurs in unstressed, syllables.)



## CHAPTER V

### THE CONSONANTS

THERE are twenty-one consonants in the English alphabet, viz. 'b', 'c', 'd', 'f', 'g', 'h', 'j', 'k', 'l', 'm', 'n', 'p', 'q', 'r', 's', 't', 'v', 'w', 'x', 'y', and 'z'. To these must be added nine consonantal digraphs, viz. 'ch', 'gh', 'ph', 'sh', 'th', 'wh', 'rh', 'ng' and 'nk'. Of these eight digraphs, 'ch', 'sh', 'th', 'wh', 'ng' and 'nk' are important, for they represent sounds not otherwise represented; but 'ph' is superfluous, for it has the same force as 'f'; and 'gh' and 'rh' are either mute (as in *though*, *myrrh*), or are simply 'g' and 'r' respectively. ('gh' is, in a few words, also 'f'—*rough*, *laugh*.)

Of the twenty-one consonants, eight (viz. 'd', 'f', 'j', 'm', 'r', 't', 'v' and 'z') are simple, straightforward fellows, that do their work efficiently, each sticking to his own job and not interfering with the others. To these may be added these six—'b', 'h', 'k', 'l', 'n' and 'p', whose only fault is they are sometimes shy, or lazy, for in some words they do not 'speak', but remain silent or 'mute'. So the only consonants that give any real trouble are these seven—'c', 'g', 'q', 's', 'w', 'x' and 'y'. These, therefore, will have to be carefully considered; for some have more than one use, and all have their peculiarities.

#### I. CONSONANT SOUNDS, AND THEIR CLASSIFICATION

##### (A) In pairs.

As we have already learnt, a consonant has no sound of its own (see Chapter I); and yet, for convenience, we may speak of the 'sound' of a consonant, so long as we remember

that by 'sound' we mean the force of the consonant, or its effect on vowel sounds. In this sense there are in English as spoken, twenty-six consonantal 'sounds'. (Of course, the sound of a consonant must not be confused with its name; for instance, the name of 'h' is 'aitch', but its sound is an 'aspirate', or breathing out, as in *hurry*.) These twenty-five consonantal sounds are represented by the following signs, or letters; and these are arranged in groups, so as to bring together sounds closely related to each other. For certain related consonants may be grouped together as 'hard' and 'soft' (or 'sharp' and 'flat'): e.g. 'b' is the soft sound of 'p', and 'p' is the hard sound of 'b' (compare their sounds in *pat*, *bat*, for instance). So, 'b' and 'p'; 'd' and 't'; 'g' and 'k'; 'v' and 'f'; 'w' and 'wh'; 'j' and 'ch'; 'z' and 's'; 'sh' (soft) and 'sh' (hard); 'th' (in *these*) and 'th' (in *thick*). The three examples given under each letter represent the initial, medial and final use of each consonantal 'sound'.

{	1. 'b':	<i>bat</i>	<i>babble</i>	<i>tab</i>
	2. 'p':	<i>pat</i>	<i>apple</i>	<i>tap</i>
{	3. 'd':	<i>dab</i>	<i>adder</i>	<i>bad</i>
	4. 't':	<i>tap</i>	<i>batter</i>	<i>pat</i>
{	5. 'g':	<i>gut</i>	<i>lugger</i>	<i>tug</i>
	6. 'k':	<i>kill</i>	<i>frisky</i>	<i>tick</i>
	'c':	<i>cut</i>	<i>acute</i>	<i>tic</i>
{	7. 'v':	<i>van</i>	<i>never</i>	<i>leave</i>
	8. 'f':	<i>fán</i>	<i>stiffer</i>	<i>leaf</i>
	'ph':	<i>phantom</i>	<i>sophist</i>	<i>monograph</i>
{	9. 'w':	<i>wit</i>	<i>unswear</i>	—
	10. 'wh':	<i>when</i>	—	—

{ 11.	'j':	<i>judge</i>	<i>badger</i>	<i>grudge</i>
{ 12.	'ch':	<i>church</i>	<i>matches</i>	<i>much</i>
{ 13.	'z':	<i>zeal</i>	<i>drizzle</i>	<i>freeze</i>
{ 14.	's':	<i>seal</i>	<i>missal</i>	<i>lease</i>
	'c':	<i>cede</i>	<i>acid</i>	<i>peace</i>
{ 15.	'sh':	<i>shed</i>	<i>ashes</i>	<i>dash</i> (hard)
{ 16.	'sh':	—	<i>leisure</i>	<i>rouge</i> (soft, as 'zh')
{ 17.	'th':	<i>this</i>	<i>leather</i>	<i>clothe</i> (soft, as 'dh')
{ 18.	'th':	<i>thick</i>	<i>lethal</i>	<i>cloth</i> (hard)
19.	'n':	<i>nut</i>	<i>runner</i>	<i>tun</i>
{ 20.	'ng':	—	<i>singer</i>	<i>lung</i>
		—	<i>linger</i>	—
{ 21.	'nk':	—	<i>banker</i>	<i>bank</i>
22.	'm':	<i>man</i>	<i>hammer</i>	<i>ram</i>
23.	'l':	<i>lip</i>	<i>pillow</i>	<i>pill</i>
24.	'r':	<i>red</i>	<i>very</i>	<i>far</i>
25.	'h':	<i>hot</i>	<i>behave</i>	—
26.	'y':	<i>yonder</i>	<i>beyond</i>	—

## (B) By speech organs.

Consonants may be classified by the speech organs chiefly concerned in their production. Of course, the tongue is the main speech organ, for without it there could be no articulate speech; but even the tongue could do little without the palate, lips, teeth and throat. So consonants produced by the tongue and the palate are called 'palatals'; those produced by the tongue and the part of the palate at the back, near the throat, are called 'gutturals' (from the Latin word for 'throat'—*guttur*);

those produced by the tongue and the teeth are called 'dentals' (from the Latin *dens*, *dentis*, a 'tooth'); and those produced by the lips are called 'labials' (from the Latin for 'lip'—*labium*). The consonants so classified are as follows:—

- (1) Palatals ('palate consonants'): 'ch', 'j', 'sh', 'zh', 'y', 'r'.

All these sounds are produced by raising the front of the tongue to the front part of the palate (called the hard palate): 'ch' as in *choose*; 'j' as in *jest*; 'sh' as in *shop*; 'zh' (soft 'sh') as in *leisure* ('lezher'); 'y' as in *yet*; 'r' as in *ran*, *prate*.

- (2) Gutturals ('throat consonants'): 'k', 'g', 'ng', 'nk'.

All these sounds are produced by raising the back of the tongue against the back of the palate (called the soft palate) near the throat. They are: 'k' as in *kind*; 'g' as in *good*; 'ng' as in *thing*, or *anger*; 'nk' as in *think*.

- (3) Dentals ('teeth consonants'): 't', 'd', 's', 'z', 'n', 'l', 'th' (hard), 'th' (soft).

All these sounds are produced by bringing the point of the tongue against the upper row of teeth: 't' as in *take*; 'd' as in *dog*; 's' as in *safe*; 'z' as in *zeal*; 'n' as in *name*; 'l' as in *life*; 'th' (hard) as in *thick*, *breath*; 'th' (soft) as in *this*, *breathe*.

- (4) Labials ('lip consonants'): 'p', 'b', 'm', 'f', 'v', 'w', 'wh'.

All these sounds are produced by closing the lips: 'p' as in *poor*; 'b' as in *boot*; 'm' as in *moon*; 'f' as in *fox*; 'v' as in *voice*; 'w' as in *wine*; 'wh' as in *whine*.

(The aspirate, 'h', is called a 'glottal' (from the Greek *glottis*, mouth of the windpipe), because it is a mere breath sound, produced without using tongue, palate, teeth or lips.)

## (C) By quality of sounds.

Consonants are also classified by the character of their sounds.

- (1) Sibilants (from the Latin *sibilantes*, 'hissing'; so, 'hissing consonants'): 's', 'z', 'sh', 'zh'.
- (2) Liquids (from Latin *liquidus*, 'flowing'): 'l', 'm', 'n', 'r'.
- (3) Nasals (from Latin *nasus*, 'the nose'): 'n', 'm', 'ng', 'nk'.
- (4) Hard and soft. Certain related consonants are sometimes classified as hard and soft (or sharp and flat): viz. 'k', 'g'; 'sh', 'zh'; 't', 'd'; 's', 'z'; 'th' (*thin*), 'th' (*this*); 'p', 'b'; 'f', 'v'; 'wh', 'w'; 'ch', 'j'; 'nk', 'ng'. In each of these pairs, the first sound is hard (or sharp), and the second is soft (or flat).

## (D) Phonetically.

Yet another, and more scientific, classification, is the following:—

- (1) Stops, or plosives: 'p', 'b'; 't', 'd'; 'k', 'g'.

These are so named because their sounds are formed by stopping at some point in the mouth the air coming from the lungs, and then releasing it with a little explosion.

In saying 'p' and 'b', the air is stopped by the lips; so they are called 'bilabial stops'. Say aloud *pat*, *bat*; *top*, *tab*, and you will at once understand this. The stoppage and release of air in pronouncing *pat* is much stronger than in pronouncing *bat*; so 'b' is a milder stop than 'p'.

In saying 't' and 'd', the stoppage is made by the tip of the tongue pressed against the front of the palate. Say aloud *tot*, *dot*, *add*, and you will find that this is what happens when you say 't' and 'd'. The stoppage and release of air in pronouncing 't' is stronger than in the case of 'd'. (These are called 'point stops'.)

In saying 'k' and 'g', the air is stopped by pressing the back of the tongue against the back of the palate. Try it by saying aloud *kale, gale; back, wag*. The consonant 'k' makes a bigger explosion than 'g'.

(2) Nasal consonants : 'm', 'n', 'ng', ('nk').

These are called 'nasal' because in forming them, part of the breath, being stopped in the mouth, passes out through the nose. You can prove this by closing your nose with finger and thumb and then trying to say, 'Tom is hurting me'; you will find that you say, 'Tob is hurting be' (as you would say it if you had a cold in your head). Say aloud *mote, note, long; ram, ran, rang; sing, sink, linger; rank, ham, con*.

(3) Continuants.

These consonants are so called because the breath, not being stopped in the mouth, passes out, but through so narrow an opening that it makes a noise as it passes through—audible friction. These are called: lip continuants, lip-teeth continuants, point continuants, front, back and glottal continuants.

(1) Lip continuants : 'w', 'wh'. So called because formed by the lips. Say aloud *went, when; wot, what; wine, whine*.

(2) Lip-teeth continuants : 'f', 'v'. These are formed by forcing the breath through between the lower lip and the upper teeth. Say aloud *fat, vat; fast, vast; off, live*.

(3) Point continuants : These are formed by the breath passing between the point of the tongue and some part of the palate or roof of the mouth. These are classified thus:—

(a) Lipping sounds : 'th', 'dh' (soft 'th'). Say aloud *thick, these; breath, breathe*; and notice the

position of the top of the tongue in saying them. It will be against the upper front teeth.

(b) The hissing sounds: 's', 'z' (soft 's'). These are formed by forcing the air between the tip of the raised tongue and the front of the palate. Say these words aloud: *see, sit, sob; mess, boss, fuss, ass; zeal, zone; fizz, fez, ease, ruse, rose.*

(Note.—Some people cannot say the hissing sounds, but lisp. 'Lisping' is saying 'th' instead of 's'; so lispers say 'He ith tho thick' for 'He is so sick'.)

(c) The hushing sounds: 'sh', 'zh' (as in *vision, leisure*). These are formed in the same way as the hissing sounds, but with the tip of the tongue farther back on the palate. Say aloud *shut, shave, shall, shot, ash, push, bosh; rouge, occasion, vision, leisure.*

(d) The 'l' and 'r' sounds: 'l', 'r'. The sound of 'l' is formed by touching the roof of the mouth with the point of the tongue, and letting the breath pass out between the side rims of the tongue and the side gums and teeth. Say aloud *look, leave, ill, holy, fulness.* (The 'l' sound is very noticeable when it comes just after 't' or 'k'. Say aloud *little, pickle*, and you will feel the air running down each side of the back of the tongue.)

The sound of 'r' is formed by the breath passing between the tip of the tongue and the front of the palate, the back of the tongue being slightly raised. If the tongue is allowed to vibrate, you get the 'trilled' 'r', very pronounced in the speech of the Scotch. If it is held steady, you will get the English 'r', untrilled, heard in such words as *rock, run, crash, crave, errand.* (See (P), 'r', in this chapter, page 100.)

(4) The front continuants: 'y', 'j', 'ch' (as in *church*). The 'y' sound is formed with the front part of the tongue almost flat against the roof of the mouth;



say aloud *you, yellow, use, beyond*. But 'j' and 'ch' are formed with the point of the tongue against the front of the palate; say aloud *Jew, chew; joke, choke; church, much, hatch; judge, badge*.

(5) **Back continuants.** There are none in English. But the sound is heard in the 'ch' of the Scotch—*loch, nicht, licht* (night, light). It is the same as the German 'ch' in *buch*, and the Urdu 'kh' in *khan*. Probably the mute 'gh' in *though, weigh, high, night*, etc. represents a guttural sound once pronounced in English, like the Urdu 'kh', or 'gh' (in *khan, ghazi*), but now lost. (See page xiii.)

(6) **Voiceless glottal continuant:** 'h' (the aspirate). The glottis is the opening between the two vocal chords. In saying *hope*, the breath passes between the vocal chords without making them vibrate; that is, there is no sound till the vowel 'o' is reached. It is simply an aspirated breath. (See (G), 'h', p. 106.)

#### Notes:

1. Some consonants are called 'voiced', and some 'voiceless'. Say aloud, without any vowel sound, 'p', and then 'b'. You will notice that it is difficult to say the latter ('b') without a slight sound from the vocal chords; whereas in saying 'p', there is no vocal sound. So 'b' is said to be 'voiced', and 'p' 'voiceless'. The 'voiceless' consonants are 'p', 't', 'k', 'wh', 'f', 'th' (hard), 's', 'sh', 'j', 'ch', 'h', 'nk'; and the 'voiced' consonants are 'b', 'd', 'g', 'm', 'n', 'ng', 'w', 'v', 'dh' (soft 'th'), 'z', 'zh', 'l', 'r', 'y'.

Or, putting them in pairs, the first of each of these pairs is voiceless, the second voiced: 'p', 'b'; 't', 'd'; 'k', 'g'; 'wh', 'w'; 'f', 'v'; 'th', 'dh'; 's', 'z'; 'nk', 'ng'; 'sh', 'zh'; 'j' and 'ch', and 'h' voiceless, 'y' and 'l', and 'r', voiced.

A vowel coming before a voiced consonant is longer in sound than before a voiceless consonant. For example,

say these words aloud, and notice the length of the 'a' sound: *bat, bad; cap, cab; lack, lag; mace, maze*. You will notice that the sound of 'a' in *bad, cab, lag, maze*, is longer than in *bat, cap, lack, mace*. In the same way, the vowel 'o' is longer in *loathe* than in *both*, and the vowel 'e' is longer in *leave* than in *leaf*.

2. Some consonants are often doubled: 'b', 'c', 'd', 'f', 'g', 'l', 'm', 'n', 'p', 'r', 's', 't'. For example, *sobbing, jabber; accuse, accomplice; fodder, meddle; coffer, gaffer; dogged, snigger; miller, roller; hammer, drummer; funny, penny; hopper, happy; married, merry; mess, bossy; clatter, bitter*. But this does not alter the sound of the consonant; for example, the 'd' in *model* is just as strong as the double 'd' in *fodder*; the double 'n' in *penny* has only the same force as the single 'n' in *many*; and *very* has the same sound as *merry*. When we say *hammer*, we may think that we pronounce the two 'm's'; but really we do not. We do not say 'ham-mer', but slide the two 'm's' into one. We do the same in sentences; for example, in saying 'I am mad with him,' we really say 'I *amad* with him', unless we are speaking slowly and emphatically, when we do repeat the 'm'—'I *am mad* with him'.

The only use of double consonants is as a sign that the preceding vowel is short; the double 't' in *latter*, for instance, tells us that the word is not to be pronounced *later*, with the long 'a' sound. But this is not always so, for *roller, tolling, polled* have the 'o' long in spite of the double 'l'. And in *very, rapid, finish, topic, widow*, for example, the vowels are short though the consonants are single.

## II. IRREGULAR CONSONANTS

### (A) The letter 'c'.

Although 'c' (as a glance through the dictionary will prove) is one of the most popular of consonants, it is really

superfluous ; for it does the work of two other consonants which are quite capable of doing all their own work themselves. For 'c' has two uses : hard 'c', just like 'k', and soft 'c', just like hard 's'. So if 'c' were abolished, the language would not suffer ; for all the work that 'c' does could be taken over by 'k' and 's'.

- (1) **Hard 'c'**. 'c' is hard (i.e. has the force of 'k') before the vowels 'a', 'o', 'u', and before other consonants ; and as a final letter.

Examples : *came* ('kaim'), *calm*, *carry*, *care*, *caution*, *caw*, *cataract*, *coke*, *cone*, *coach*, *comb*, *cottage*, *coffin*, *cool*, *cook*, *count*, *coward*, *corpse*, *course*, *cord*, *cure*, *acute*, *cutter*, *cup*, *curse*, *closed*, *clause*, *eclipse*, *clean*, *clench*, *exclude*, *clasp*, *clay*, *clergy*, *cramp*, *crazy*, *crow*, *crowd*, *crucial*, *croak*, *crescent*, *cry*, *scrimp*, *acrobat*, *act*, *faction*, *erect*, *defection*, *addicted*, *infliction*, *doctrine*, *suction*, *topic*, *tonic*, *static*, *metric*, *attic*, *tic*.

- (2) **Soft 'c'** : 'c' is soft (i.e. has the force of hard 's') before 'e', 'i', 'y'.

Examples : *cell* ('sel'), *cedar*, *recent*, *recede*, *centre*, *certain*, *cent*, *celebrate*, *precise*, *city*, *civil*, *cinder*, *circle*, *cider*, *cipher*, *cigar*, *decide*, *cycle*, *cyclone*, *cypress*, *cylinder*, *cynic*, *mercy*, *racy*, *cease*, *receive*, *deceit*, *ceiling*, *price*, *placid*, *ice*, *icy*, *icicle*, *perception*, *service*, *surface*, *justice*, *place*, *piece*.

(In *circle*, *icicle*, *cycle*, *cyclone*, *council*, both sounds of 'c' are heard.)

- (3) **Double 'c' ('cc')** : The pronunciation of double 'c' follows the two rules given just above.

(a) Before the vowels 'a', 'o', 'u', and consonants, 'cc' is hard, like 'k'.

Examples : *occasion*, *accommodate*, *accuse*, *accompany*, *accustomed*, *account*, *occur*, *according*, *accomplish*, *accurate*, *succour*, *occupy*, *occult*, *accuse*, *accost*, *acclaim*, *acclimatize*, *accredit*, *accretion*, *acquire*.

(b) Before the vowels 'e', 'i' and 'y', double 'c' is pronounced like 'ks' (or 'x'); that is, the first 'c' is hard, and the second is soft. (So, *accent* might be spelt *aksent* or *axent*.)

Examples: *accident* ('aksident' or 'axident'), *eccentric*, *occident*, *accession*, *accelerate*, *succeed*, *success*, *access*, *succinct*, *accept*, *accentuate*, *vaccinate*, *vaccine*.

(4) 'c' with 'k', 'q' and 's'.

(1) 'ck': Not content with ousting 'k' in a number of words, 'c' often (and quite unnecessarily) thrusts itself into certain words along with 'k'; so there are many words spelt with 'ck' which simply have the 'k' sound.

For example: *back* ('bak'), *attack*, *speck*, *wreck*, *trick*, *pick*, *rock*, *flock*, *truck*, *stuck*, *tackle*, *heckle*, *fickle*, *buckle*, *backer*, *beckon*, *sickly*, *picker*, *mocker*, *lucky*, etc. (Note.—'ck' is never initial.)

(2) 'cq': In the same way, 'c' is sometimes used with 'q', as 'cq', with the sound of 'k'.

For example: *acquit* ('akwit'), *acquire*, *acquainted*, *acquiescent*, *acquisitive*, *acquisition*, *acquittal*.

(3) 'sc': When 's' and 'c' come together (as 'sc'), the 'c' is hard or soft according to the rules given above:

(a) hard 'c' before 'a', 'o', 'u', etc.

As in *scamp* ('skamp'), *scale*, *scarred*, *scatter*, *scold*, *score*, *scope*, *scuffle*, *sculpture*, *scout*, *scoured*, *screw*, *scream*, *scribe*, *script*, *escape*, *rescue*.

(b) soft 'c' before 'e', 'i', 'y', etc.

As in *science* ('sei-ens'), *scene*, *scept*, *sceptre*, *scythe*, *scimitar*, *scissors*, *discipline*, *descend*, *iridescent*, *scintillate*, *crescent*, *nascent*.

Exceptions: *sceptic* is pronounced 'skeptik', though 'e' follows 'sc'. (*Fascist* and *crescendo* are pronounced 'Fashist' and 'kreshendo'.)

## (B) The digraph 'ch'.

The characteristic force of 'ch' is heard twice in the word *church*. Like most other signs in English, it has, unfortunately, other sounds as well; but this one is its own. (It might be expressed by 'tsh'; e.g. *much*, 'mutsh'.)

## (1) 'ch' as in church.

Examples: *chafe, chapel, cherry, cheese, check, chicken, chin, chief, child, cheap, choice, choke, chop, churn, chuckle, choose, chaw, chalk, chew, chair, cheer, charm, chirp, sachel, teach, leech, rich, such, much, pouch, debauch, poacher, preacher; trench, blench, crunch, branch, conch (shell), finch, flinch, pinch, stench, bunch, ranch, lunch.*

Before final 'ch', the letter 't' is inserted in many words, mainly to show that the vowel is short: e.g. *batch, latch, catch, fetch, wretched, sketch, witch, pitch, stitch, notch, scotch, blotch, crutch, hutch.*

(Such words are pronounced exactly like other words ending in 'ch' without the 't', if the vowel is short: compare *such* and *crutch*, *match* and *attach*, *pitch* and *rich*.)

(2) Soft 'ch', like 'sh'. In some words, 'ch' is soft, and has the sound of 'sh' (as in *shell, shore, shift*).

Examples: *chaise* ('shaiz'), *chemise* ('shameez'), *chamois* ('shamwaa'), *chimpanzee* ('shimponzee'), *machine* ('masheen'), *moustache, chivalry, douche, cheval* (glass).

## (3) Hard 'ch', like 'k'. In some words 'ch' is hard, and has the sound of 'k' or hard 'c'.

Examples: *character* ('karakter'), *chasm* ('kasm'), *chemistry* ('kemistri'), *cholera, choir* ('kweir'), *choral, chronic, chorus, chronicle, choler, chloroform, chrysalis, Christian, scheme* ('skecm'), *school, scholar, echo, mechanic, schooner, monarch, heresiarch, architect, archaic, archæology, archangel, archetype, archipelago, archive, monarchy, monarchical, diarchy, chord, Christmas, chromatic, chronology.*

Exceptions: *schedule* is generally pronounced 'shed-eul', but by some 'skedeul'. *Schism* is quite irregular, being pronounced 'sizm' ('ch' mute).

(C) The letter 'g'.

Like the letter 'c', 'g' is pronounced in two ways: hard (as in *gag*) and soft (as in *gem*); but, unlike 'c', it is not superfluous, for, though soft 'g' is simply 'j', hard 'g' does work done by no other consonant. (Both hard and soft 'g' are heard in the word *gaje*—'gaij'.)

- (I) **Hard 'g'.** Like 'c', 'g' is hard before the vowels 'a', 'o' and 'u', and the consonants 'l' and 'r'; and as a final letter (*beg*), unless followed by mute 'e'.

Examples: *gap, gable, gather, gang, garden, gaudy, gall, gold, got, gospel, gorge, goal, gown, gourd, good, goose, gust, gull, gewgaw, govern, gun, gutter, glad, glue, gleam, globe, glide, grow, grace, green, grab, grip, bag, brag, bog, beg, mug, pig, flog, rug, magnate, pigment, segment, ugly, cognate, gloom, grave, grip, gleam, gloaming, great.*

Exception: In *gaol*, the 'g' is soft ('jail'): also spelt *jail*.

(Note.—Some words end with 'g' followed by mute 'ue', which may be meant to mark the 'g' as hard: e.g. *league* ('leeg'), *tongue* ('tung'), *harangue, vogue, vague, plague, rogue, colleague, morgue, intrigue* ('intreeg').)

In the same way, mute 'u' following 'g' in some words marks the 'g' as hard: e.g. *guard, guild, guilty, guile, guarantee, guide, beguile, guise, guitar, guillotine, disguise, guess.*)

- (2) **Soft 'g'.** Soft 'g' has just the same force as 'j'. As a rule, 'g' is soft before the vowels 'e' and 'i'; but there are many exceptions, especially in the case of 'i'.

Examples: *gem* ('jem'), *gelid* ('jelid'), *germ, gender, general, genial, genius, genus, gentle, gesture, geography.*

*giant, gill, gin, gibbet, ginger, giraffe, age, agent, passage, page, huge, refuge, besiege, liege, wager, surgeon, surgery, imagine, rage, stage, urgent, purge, merge, large, rigid, frigid, gorge, forge, engine.*

The terminations ‘-age’, ‘-ege’, have the ‘g’ soft : e.g. *pupilage* (‘peupilaij’), *nonage, message, passage, privilege* (‘priviloj’). The final mute ‘e’ is a sign that ‘g’ is soft.

Exceptions : In the following words the ‘g’ is hard, though it precedes ‘e’ or ‘i’ : *geese, gelding, get, forget, beget, gig, giggle, giddy, give, gift, girdle, girl, girth, begin, gulls* (of fish), *gear, gild, guilt, gimlet, gingham, gizzard.*

(Note.—Just as ‘t’ often comes before ‘ch’ (as in *match*), so in many words ‘d’ comes before soft ‘g’, with much the same effect, or lack of effect. For example *ridge* (‘rij’), *badge, dodge, pledge, drudge, cadger, lodger, sledging, grudged, midget, bridge, ledger, fledgeling, dudgeon, hedger.* Before ‘dg’ in such words, the vowel is always short.)

- (3) **Double ‘g’** (‘gg’). Double ‘g’ is usually just like hard ‘g’, with the vowel before it always short.

Examples : *dagger, baggage, haggle, beggar, leggy, trigger, wriggle, snigger, piggy, flogging, boggy, boggle, struggle, lugger, smuggler.*

But, in a few words, ‘gg’ is sounded like ‘j’ : e.g. *suggest* (‘sujest’), *exaggerate* (‘exajərait’).

#### (D) The digraph ‘ng’.

The digraph ‘ng’ with a vowel before it gives the peculiar sound heard in such words as *sang, strength, ring, long, stung*. There is a great difference of sound between the ‘n’ of *finger* and the ‘n’ of *fin*. The former is a guttural, which you cannot utter without opening your jaws ; the latter a dental, which you utter with almost closed teeth. Try saying ‘fin-ger’ and ‘fing-er’.

Examples : *bang, bangle, hanged, length, sing, ringer, bringing, long, songster, conger, wronging, sung, rung, lung, tonga, mangle, linger, angry, mango, tongue, mangle, flinging.*

The termination ‘-ing’ is very common, for it is the form of the present participle of the verb ; e.g. *loving, hating, speaking, living, dying, running, standing, etc.*

#### Notes :

1. There is a difference between the pronunciation of *singer* and *linger* which is not at first easy to catch. We say ‘sing-er’ in one case, but ‘ling-ger’ in the other. That is, in *linger* the ‘g’ sound is doubled or repeated. There is no rule to guide us here, so we have to learn the pronunciation of each word.

(a) With single ‘g’, like ‘sing-er’ : *ringer, bringer, hanger, ganger, stinger, wringer, hanging, longing, ringing, stinging, bringing, flinging, wronging, banging.*

(b) With double ‘g’, like ‘ling-ger’ : *anger* (‘ang-gər’), *longer, monger* (‘mung-gər’), *stronger, finger, tonga, linger, mangle, angle* (‘ang-gl’), *bangle, mangle, mango, single, tingle, wrangle, jangling.*

2. The ‘ng’ sound does not occur when mute ‘e’ follows the ‘g’ ; for then the ‘g’ is soft, and the ‘ng’ is really ‘nj’, as in such words as *singe* (‘sinj’), *lounge* (‘lounj’), *change* (‘chainj’), *strange, range, grange, lunge* (‘lunj’), *plunge* (‘plunj’), *revenge* (‘rəvenj’), *sponge* (‘spunj’), etc. This can be easily remembered ; but it is not so easy to distinguish in the case of words like *manger*, spelt like *anger* but pronounced ‘mainjər’. *Danger, stranger, ranger, changer*, all have soft ‘g’ and the vowel long, and are pronounced ‘dainjər’, ‘strainjər’, etc. So *ginger* is pronounced ‘jinjər’, *sponger* is ‘spunjər’, *lunger* is ‘lunjər’.

3. ‘nk’. The digraph ‘-nk’ produces a sound similar to that of ‘-ng’, but sharper. Compare the sounds of



*bank* and *bang*, *sink* and *sing*, *sunk* and *sung*, *linger* and *rinker*, *anger* and *anchor*. In fact, '-nk' is really '-ngk'; for the word *bank* is really sounded 'bang-k' or 'bangk', and *rink* is 'ringk', and *sunk* is 'sungk'. The '-nk' sound is heard also in words spelt with 'n' before hard 'c' (like *zinc*), and hard 'ch' (like *anchor*), and 'q' (like *banquet*): i.e. letters representing the 'k' sound.

Examples: *sank*, *bank*, *banker*, *ranks*, *thanking*, *sink*, *winking*, *rinker*, *thinker*, *kink*, *sunk*, *drunken*, *chunk*, *monkey* ('munki'), *honk*, *blanket*, *stank*, *brink*, *blink*, *linked*, *sinks*, *minx* ('minks'), *links*, *lynx* ('links'), *tincture*, *anxious* ('ankshəs'), *puncture* ('punkchər'), *sanctuary* ('sankcheuri'), *sanction* ('sankshən'), *anchorite*, *lanky*, *ankle*, *anklet*, *dank*, *frank*, *rank*, *spank*, *tank*, *ink*, *inky*, *drink*, *drank*, *tinker*, *zinc*.

4. It was not so long ago the fashion with many educated people to pronounce the '-ing' of participles as 'in', and talk of 'huntin'', 'fishin'', and 'shootin''; and some old-fashioned people still do it. But in modern standard English speech, the '-ng' is clearly pronounced (*hunting*, *shooting*). An opposite mistake with uneducated people is to make too much of the '-ng' sound, and say 'thinkingg', 'sing-gingg', 'speaking-g'. This is a vulgarity to be avoided.

#### (E) The letter 'q'.

The force of the consonant 'q' is that of 'k', as can be heard in such words as *barque*, *piquant*, in which the 'u' is mute ('baark', 'peekənt'). But 'q' is never used alone, but is always followed by 'u', which is generally sounded as 'w'; so that words like *quote*, *quail*, *queen*, are pronounced 'kwoat', 'kwaile', 'kween'. In such words 'qu' is simply 'kw'; and in words where the following 'u' is mute, 'q' is simply 'k'. This letter 'q' is, therefore, a superfluous consonant; for all the work it does could be done equally well by 'k' and 'w'.

Examples :

- (1) 'qu', sounded as 'kw' : as in *quaint* ('kwaint'), *query* ('kweeri'), *squint* ('skwint'), *request*, *quiet*, *quote*, *question*, *quarter*, *quarry*, *quandary*, *quit*, *quantity*, *quality*, *quaver*, *quick*, *quite*, *quill*, *queer*, *quench*, *quinine*, *queen*, *bequeath*, *required*, *bequest*, *sequel*, *marquis*, *conquest*, *obsequious*, *inquire*, *iniquity*, *unequal*, *equestrian*, *equable*, *square*, *squire*, *squeeze*, *squeak*, *exquisite* ('ekskwizit'), *acquaint*, *antiquated*.
- (2) 'q' with mute 'u', sounded as 'k' : as in *quoit* ('koit'), *quay* ('kee'), *conquer* ('konkər'), *piquant* ('peekənt'), *barque* ('baark'), *pique* ('peek'), *plaque* ('plaak'), *croquet* ('kroakai'), *laquer* ('lakər'), *masque*, *masquerade*, *marquee*, *antique* ('anteek'), *liquor*, *brusque*, *clique*, *technique*.

(Note, *conquest* ('konkwest'), but *conquer* ('konkər').)

Note.—The letter 'u' has the force of 'w' in a few words after hard 'g' : e.g. *languid*, *languish* ('langwid', 'langwish'), *language* ('langwij'), *distinguish*, *extinguish* ('-gwish'). But in *languor*, the 'u' is mute ('langgər').

#### (F) The letter 's'.

The consonant 's', like 'c' and 'g', has two sounds, a hard and a soft. The hard sound (as in *safe*, *master*, *sense*) is the proper 's' sound ; the soft sound (as in *easy*, *rose*) is simply the sound of 'z'. So, like 'c' and 'g', 's' is not content with its own job, but steals work from another letter as well. This has led to a further irregularity, the necessity for the use of double 's' ('ss') to make sure that in certain words the 's' is pronounced hard and not soft : e.g. because *as* is pronounced 'az', the name of a donkey is spelt *ass*, to show it is to be pronounced with hard 's'. Hard 's' and double 's' have exactly the same sound, so one of them is superfluous.

## Examples :

- (1) hard 's': as in *safe, saw, savage, set, send, settle, seen, seed, sit, sin, side, style, sot, soft, solo, soda, suffer, sudden, suit, sued, soot, soup, sow, slip, speed, scheme, stretch, spout, response, suspense, best, insular, scream, trespass, gasping, instant, especial, pastime, cease, mass, massage, passage, messy, message, hiss, missing, kissed, use* (noun), *boss, loss, fussy, rust, dose, lease, rents, hurts, backs, hops*.
- (2) soft 's', like 'z': as in *ease, easy* ('eez', 'eezi'), *praise, prays* ('praiz'), *rose, rise, cries, use* (verb), *confuse, crews, dues, cruise, grows, trees, nose, choose, goes, is, boys, noise, clause, claws, breathes, slaves, loves, moves, drives, bends, sands, hangs, sings, songs, borrows, lose, burns, fills, aims, resent, resemble, represent, pleasant, present, resin, raisin, reason, does, doesn't, has, hasn't, is, isn't, was, these, those, wisely, posing, using*.

These two 's' sounds are confusing, for there is, apparently, no rule to guide us, and so the correct use of the two is a matter of memorizing. Why, for instance, should 's' be hard in *cease* and *increase* ('sees', 'inkrees'), but soft in *ease, please* ('eez', 'pleez')? Why should *rose* be pronounced 'roaz', but *dose, 'doas'*? Or *lose, 'looz'*, but *loose, 'loos'*? The very same word is sometimes pronounced with soft 's' as a verb and with hard 's' as a noun: e.g. *use, close, house*. (See Chapter VII, 3, p. 138.)

Note that the 's' of the plural of nouns is always soft, except after final 't', 'p', and 'k' (hard 'c', 'ch'). So *cabs, pods, dogs, bulls, rams, cans, cars, hives, cows, boys* (all 'z'—'cabz', 'podz', etc.); but *cats, blocks, aches, tonics, hops* (all 's' hard).

## (G) The digraph 'sh'.

's' combines with the aspirate, 'h', to form the sound of 'sh', which occurs in such words as *sham, bishop, ash*. The sign 'sh' has only this one sound, which is hard; but

there is a soft 'sh' sound, for which there is no separate sign, heard in such words as *pleasure, leisure, vision, persuasion*. Just as 'z' properly represents the soft 's' sound, 'zh' might well be adopted to represent the soft 'sh' sound.

#### Examples :

- (1) 'sh' : as in *shaft, shape, sharp, shelter, sheep, ship, shine, shop, shoal, shut, shoe, shoot, shout, shriek, shrub, shore, shawl, shoulder, shay, sheer, sheaf, shown, shambles, ash, smash, push, rush, crush, dish, wished, bosh, rash, crash, thresh, cashier, ashore, ashamed, fashion, cushion, refreshing, bishop, fisher, distinguished, dashing, anguish, languish, oldish, flush*.

Although 'sh' represents this sound only, there are many other ways of representing this 'sh' sound.

- (2) Other signs for the 'sh' sound. The 'sh' sound is expressed in various ways, in addition to the digraph 'sh' itself.

(1) soft 'ch' : as in *chivalry* ('shivəlrɪ'), *chaise, machine*, etc. (See examples under 'ch').

(2) Certain word terminations : in (a) '-si' ('-sion', '-ssion'); (b) '-ci' ('-cion', '-cious', '-cial', '-ciate'); (c) '-ce' ('-cean'); (d) '-sci' ('-scien'); (e) '-ti' ('-tion', '-tious', '-tial', '-tiate', '-tien').

Examples : (a) *pension* ('penshn'), *mansion, tension, apprehension, expansion, comprehension, dissension, inversion* ; *mission, passion, session, cession, possession, omission*.

(b) *suspicion* ('suspishn) ; *suspicious* ('suspishəs'), *judicious, delicious, gracious, malicious, spacious, tenacious, specious, precious* ; *special* ('speshl'), *judicial, crucial, facial, racial, commercial, social, official* ; *officiate* ('ofishiāt'), *associate, dissociate, excruciating, appreciate*.

(c) *ocean* ('oashn'), *oceanic*.

(d) *conscience* ('konshəns'), *prescience*.

(e) *nation* ('naishn'), *notion*, *lotion*, *station*, *motion*, *caution*, *ablution*, *edition*, *creation*, *addition*, *tuition*, *condition*, *perdition*, *alteration*, *portion*, *action*, *function*, *election*, *affection*, *infection*, *defection*, *affliction*, *dissection*, *desertion*; *seditious* ('sədishəs'), *vexatious*, *factionous*, *infectious*, *facetious*, *propitious*, *fictitious*, *conscientious*; *partial* ('paarshl'), *martial*, *palatial*, *confidential*, *essential*, *substantial*, *consequential*, *evidential*; *vitiate* ('vishiait'), *novitiate*, *negotiate*, *differentiate*; *patent* ('paishənt'), *patience*, *sentient*, *quotient*.

(Note.—Odd spellings: *Asia* ('aishə'), *Asian*, *fuchsia* ('feushə'), *schedule* ('shedeul'), *fashion*, *luncheon*.)

(f) Note these unusual words in '-sure': *sure* ('shoor'), *surety* ('shoorti'), *insure* ('inshoor'), *insurance*, *assure*, *assurance*.

- (3) The soft 'sh', or 'zh', sound. There is a soft 'sh' sound, though it is not in any word represented by the digraph 'sh'. It should really be expressed by 'zh'; for it has the same relation to hard 'sh' as 'z' (and soft 's') has to hard 's'. This 'zh' sound is heard in some words ending with '-sion', and in some words spelt with 's' before 'u'.

Examples :

(1) Words ending with '-sion': *fusion* ('feuzhn'), *vision* ('vizhn'), *occasion* ('okaizhn'), *explosion* ('exploazhn'), *confusion*, *conclusion*, *contusion*, *effusion*, *delusion*, *illusion*, *diffusion*, *exclusion*, *inclusion*, *intrusion*, *derision*, *revision*, *provision*, *decision*, *elision*, *persuasion*, *invasion*, *evasion*, *erosion*, *corrosion*, *lesion*, *vision*.

(2) Words ending with '-sure': *leisure* ('lezhər'),

*pleasure, measure, treasure, seizure* ('seezheur'), *usury* ('yeuzheuri'), *exposure*.

(But note the unusual sound of hard 'sh' in the words *sure* ('shoor'), *surety* ('shoorti'), *insure* ('inshoor'), *insurance, assure, assurance*.)

(3) Other ways of representing the 'zh' sound : *régime* ('raizheem'), *rouge* ('roozh'), *transition* ('trans-izhn'), *usual* ('yeuzheual').

#### (H) The digraph 'th'.

'th' has two sounds—a hard, and a soft. You hear the hard 'th' in *thin* and *breath*, and the soft in *this* and *breathe*. (The soft sound might well be represented by 'dh', to distinguish it from the hard 'th': so, 'dhis', 'breedh'.)

(1) hard 'th': as in *thatch, thank, thaw, theme, thesis, theory, thews, thin, thick, thing, thirst, third, thimble, theatre, thief, thorn, thousand, thunder, thorpe, thrash, thresh, threaten, thread, three, thrift, thrice, thrill, throb, throng, throw, throat, thrust, thrush, through, quoth, loth, both, wrath, path, bath, lath, breath, death, wreath, heath, moth, broth, arithmetic, truth, truthful, ruthless, toothless, teeth, sheath, pith, pathology, mathematics, wealth, health, tilth, stealthy, thermometer, hath, oath, froth*.

(2) soft 'th' ('dh'): as in *this* ('dhis'), *these, those, that, than, then, thence, the, they, them, there, thither, thus, thy, thee, thou, thine, though, although, breathe, writhe, blithe, seethe, with, bathe, wreathe, loathe, soothe, booth, tithe, feather, leather, weather, whether, tether, together, bother, brother, mother, another, other, dither, heather, whither, hither, rhythm, fathom, father, rather, lather, loathesome, teething, soothing, loathing, breathing, bathing, tithing, writhing*.

(Note.—'th' is simply 't' in *thyme* ('teim'), *Thames* ('tenz'), *Thomas* ('tomus'), *phthisis* ('teisis'—'ph' mute).)

## (I) The digraph 'gh'.

'gh' is not much used in English, and where it is, it is generally mute. It is undoubtedly a survival of a guttural sound no longer heard in English speech, probably like the German 'ch', or the Scotch 'ch' heard in such words as *loch*, *nicht* (like the 'gh' in Urdu in such words as *ghazi*). (In Cheshire, a farmer still calls a *plough*, 'pleuch', with the 'ch' sound heard in the Scotch *loch*.) But where it is sounded at all now, 'gh' is simply hard 'g', as in such words as *ghost* ('goast'), *ghastly*, *aghast*, *ghetto*, *ghecko*, *ghoul*, *gherkin*, *burgher*.

In a few words 'gh' has turned into 'f': viz. *cough* ('kof'), *rough*, *tough*, *enough*, *slough* ('rut', 'tuf', etc.), and *laugh* ('laf' or 'laaf'), *laughter*, *draught*.

In most other words where 'gh' occurs, it is mute or silent.

Examples: *though*, *although* ('thoa'); *through* ('throo'); *thought* ('thaut'), *bought*, *brought*, *sought*, *fought*; *plough* ('plou'), *drought*, *doughty* ('drou', 'douti'); *height*, *sleight* ('heit', 'sleit'); *weight*, *freight* ('wait', 'frait'); *weigh*, *sleigh* ('wai', 'slai'); *high*, *nigh*, *sigh* ('hei', 'nei', 'sei'); *sight* ('seit'), *might*, *plight*, *night*, *light*, *fight*, *right*, *slight*, *wight*, *bight*, *blight*, *smight*, *tight*; *neigh*, *neighbour* ('nai', 'naiber'); *naught* ('naut'), *taught*, *naughty*, *caught*, *fraught*, *haughty*.

## (J) The digraph 'ph'.

'ph' has the force of 'f' (and so is an unnecessary sign). It is used almost entirely in words of Greek origin.

Examples: *phantom* ('fantəm'), *phrase* ('fraiz'), *pheasant* ('fezənt'), *strophe* ('stroafi'), *phial*, *phenomena*, *philanthropy*, *philosopher*, *phlegm* ('flem'), *photograph*, *physics*, *physiology*, *phosphorus*, *telephone*, *graphic*, *sophist*, *prophet*, *geography*, *telegraph*, *stenography*, *monograph*, *hieroglyphics*.

(Note.—In *uphold*, *upholster*, *uphill*, 'ph' is not the digraph, but 'p' and 'h', both pronounced—'up-hold', 'up-held', 'up-hill', owing to the derivation of the words. In the word *shepherd* (literally, 'sheep-herd'), the 'h' is mute (so—'shepərd').)

(K) The digraph 'rh'.

As the 'h' in 'rh' is always mute, this digraph has always simply the force of the letter 'r'; and so it serves no useful purpose. All the words in which it occurs could be written with simple 'r'.

Examples: *rhapsody* ('rapsədi'), *rhetoric*, *rheumatism*, *rhinocerus*, *rhododendron*, *rhomboid*, *rhubarb*, *rhyme*, *rhythm*, *myrrh* ('mer').

(L) The letter 'w'.

As a rule, 'w' is a regular consonant, with the force it has in such words as *wail*, *went*, *walk*, *swear*, *beware*. But there are two ways in which it is irregular: (a) it is in some words mute (e.g. *wrong*, *answer*); and (b) it is sometimes used as a vowel, as we learnt in Chapter I.

(1) 'w': regular use.

Examples: *won*, *went*, *wink*, *wound*, *wall*, *wave*, *wait*, *wove*, *weave*, *want*, *wiles*, *water*, *watch*, *wicked*, *wipe*, *await*, *awaken*, *awarded*, *beware*, *bewail*, *swindle*, *swank*, *sward*, *swung*, *swinging*, *sweet*, *swallow*, *sway*, *sweep*, *swelling*, *swoon*, *swerve*, *swimming*, *sweat*, *dwarf*, *dwindle*, *dwelling*, *twelve*, *twenty*, *twig*, *twine*, *twist*, *twilight*, *twiddle*.

(2) 'w' mute: as in *wrong*, *sword*, *answer*, *write*, *whole*, *who*.

(See Section III, below, 'Consonants sometimes mute'.)

(3) 'w' as a semi-vowel.

In the digraphs 'ow', 'ew', and 'aw', the letter 'w' is really the vowel 'u', and the sounds of 'ow', 'ew' and 'aw' are just the same as those of 'ou', 'eu' and 'au'. In the following words, however, the 'w' is really mute; for it adds nothing to the long 'o' sound already in the



words: *grow* ('groa'), *blow*, *flow*, *snow*, etc. (See Chapter II.)

See, for examples, pages 26, 37, under the diphthong 'ou' ('ow'), and long 'u' ('ew'); and Chapter I, under 'au' ('aw'), page 22.

(4) 'u' as 'w'.

In some words, 'u' stands for 'w': e.g. *persuade*, (perswaid), *suave* ('swaav'), *assauage*, *suite*, *desuetude*, *cuirass* ('kwiras'), *cuisine* ('kwizeen'). Note, also, *one* ('wun').

(M) The digraph 'wh'.

In old English, the digraph 'wh' was spelt 'hw'; and this is more correct, for, properly, the aspirate 'h' should be sounded and, when it is, it is really sounded before, and not after, the 'w'. For example, the words *when*, *what*, should be written as they are pronounced—'hwen', 'hwot'. All words beginning with 'wh' should be pronounced in this way, except the few given below in which the 'w' is mute. But even among English people there are but few (except in the north) who so pronounce: generally such words as *when*, *what*, *whither*, *whether*, are pronounced with the unaspirated 'w', as 'wen', 'wot', 'wither', 'wether'; which is a pity. A few words, however, should have the proper 'wh' sound to distinguish them from very similar words: e.g. *whet* ('hwet', to sharpen) to differentiate it from *wet*, damp; *whither* from *wither*, *whether* from *weather*, *whely* (curds) from *weigh*, *way*.

Examples: *what* ('hwot'), *when*, *whence*, *where*, *which*, *whither*, *while*, *why*, *wheat*, *wheel*, *whine*, *whip*, *whisper*, *white*, *wharf*, *whale*, *heeze*, *wheel*, *helk*, *overwhelm*, *whelp*, *wherry*, *whet*, *whiff*, *Whig*, *whist*, *whimper*, *whim*, *whirl*, *whiskers*, *whisky*, *whistle*, *whittle*, *whizz*, *whortleberry*, *whorl*.

Note.—In the following words, 'wh' is pronounced as simple 'h', the 'w' being mute: *who*, *whom*, *whose*,

*whoever, whole, wholly, wholesome, whoop, whore, whosoever, whomsoever* ('hoo', 'hoom', 'hoal', 'hoal-li', etc.).

(N) The letter 'x'.

The letter 'x' is really superfluous, for all its work could be done by two other consonants, viz. 'k' and 's' (or 'g' and 'z'). For example, we could spell *tax, extra, annex* with 'ks' instead of 'x' and get exactly the same sound—*taks, ekstra, anneks*.

The letter 'x' has two sounds, one hard ('ks'), and one softer ('gz'). It has the 'ks' sound in monosyllables (like *six*), before another consonant (as in *expose, extra*), when reinforced by soft 'c' (as in *excise, excess*), and when it immediately precedes an unstressed syllable (as in *exercise*). It has the softer 'gz' sound before a vowel or mute 'h' in the stressed syllable (as in *exult, exhort*—'egzult', 'egz(h)aurt'). (This sound is what you hear in saying the word *eggs*.)

Examples: (Say the words aloud to catch the difference between the 'ks' and the 'gz' sounds.)

- (1) 'x' as 'ks' (hard): as in *ox* ('oks'), *axe, tax, vex, fox, six, fix, pox, lax, j lax, flex, mix, pax, sex, index, complex, axiom, lynx* ('links'), *extant, extent, extra, extol, extort, extravagant, extirpate, exterminate, extreme, extinguish, expose, expel, express, export, expert, expand, expend, explain, explode, excuse, excess, excise, exceed, except, excellent, exchange, excel, exercise, fixture, perplexed, expect, sphinx* ('sfinks'), *anxious* ('ankshəs'), *pixie, execrable*.
- (2) 'x' as 'gz' (soft): as in *example* ('egzaampl'), *exaggerate* ('egzajərait'), *exist* ('egziʃt'), *exact, exalted, examine, exert, exult, exonerate, exorbitant, exotic, exhale, exhibit, exhaust* ('egzaust'), *exhort, exhilarate, anxiety* ('angzeiəti').

(Note.—In *exile* and *exude*, the 'x' may be either 'ks' or 'gz': so, 'ekseil', 'ekseud', or 'egzeil', 'egzeud'.)

- (3) **initial 'x'**: At the beginning of words, 'x' has the sound of 'z'; for example, *Xenophon* is pronounced 'zenofn'. But as the words beginning with 'x' are very few, and most of them scientific or technical terms, we need not trouble much about them. They are all words of Greek origin. (Examples: *xylophone* ('zeilofoan'), a musical instrument; *xanthippe* ('zan-tipi'), a scold, from the wife of Socrates.)

(O) **The letter 'y'.**

There is nothing much to say about the letter 'y', which as a consonant is regular in its use, except to remind you that it is also used as a vowel. (See Chapter I for examples.)

- (1) As a consonant: as in *yellow, yet, yarn, yard, year, yearn, yeast, yesterday, yield, yore, you, young, yoke, yolk, yonder, your, youth, beyond, yeoman*.
- (2) As a vowel:
- (a) short 'i' sound: as in *hymn, myth, lyric*, etc.
- (b) long 'i' sound: as in *lyre, cry, tyre, why, by*, etc.
- (3) As part of digraphs: e.g. 'ay' (*bay*); 'ey' (*grey*); 'oy' (*joy*); 'uy' (*buy*).

(P) **The letter 'r'.**

The letter 'r' is regular in its use; but something must be said about its pronunciation, and its effect upon vowels.

(1) **Pronunciation.** 'r' is a 'palatal' consonant, and is produced by raising the tip of the tongue to the front of the palate. If the tip of the tongue is kept loose, so that the breath makes it vibrate, the result is the trilled 'r'. This is heard in the speech of the Scottish people, who 'roll' their 'r's' very strongly. They say, for example, *The prrettiest girrl in the worrld*. But the 'r' heard in ordinary English speech is the untrilled 'r', in the production of which the tip of the tongue is not allowed to vibrate.

This untrilled 'r' in standard English speech is heard distinctly only when it is initial (as in *ran, rich, rock, rush, real, remember*); between a consonant and a vowel (as in *bread, angry, creed, drove*): or between vowels, the second of which is pronounced (as in *very, florid, caring*); or, more briefly, 'r' is heard when a vowel follows in the same or the next word: e.g. *merit, near it, for us*.

It is often stated that the English 'r' is not pronounced between a vowel and a consonant (as in *arm, lord, stern*, etc.), nor when it is final in the spelling (as in *bar, for, her*), nor when followed by a mute vowel (as *hare, here, store*). But this is not quite correct. There certainly is a difference between the sounds of *laud* and *lord*, *alms* and *arms*, *pause* and *pores*, *stalk* and *stork*. In the words with 'r' there is slight throaty sound, which is quite absent from the other words given. The riming of words like *laud* and *lord* in verse is called a 'Cockney rime', and is considered a defect, because the sound of the words is not the same. Of course there are many educated English people who pronounce, for example, *bearer* as 'baeraa', and *officer* as 'ofisaa', and *my clerk* as 'mai klaak'—especially in the British Army; but this is considered an affected accent, and is not to be imitated. The same type of speakers will turn the long 'i' sound into long 'a', and say 'Quate fave males' (*kwait faiv marlz*) when they mean, 'Quite five miles' (*kweit feiv meilz*). Personally, I prefer the Yorkshireman's way of saying it, 'kwort foiv moilz'—though both are wrong.

The 'r' is pronounced differently in different parts of the British Isles according to the different dialects. One very peculiar 'r' is the Northumbrian 'burr', as it is called, which is known as a guttural, or uvular, 'r'; whereas the usual English (and the Scottish rolled) 'r' is a lingual 'r', because made with the tip of the tongue. The burr heard in the speech of Newcastle people is really a strong guttural sound, made in the throat. It might be represented by a strong 'gh'. On the other

hand, a typical Durham man cannot pronounce 'r', and says 'w' instead. I once got a Northumbrian and a Durham man to say the old alliterative line: *Round the rugged rocks the ragged rascals ran their rural races.* The Northumbrian spoke something like this: 'Ghound the ghugged ghlocks the ghagged ghascals ghan their ghughal ghaces.' The man from Durham said: 'Wound the wugged wocks the wagged wascals wan their wuwal waces.' A Scotchman would have said: 'Rround the rugged rocks the rragged rrascals rran theirr rrural rraces.'

(2) The effect of 'r' on vowel sounds. In studying the vowels, we have noted how a following 'r' often seems to change the sound of the preceding vowel. (a) It changes the long 'a' sound, in such words as *fare, dare, daring, shared.* (See Chapter I, Note 2, page 11.) (b) It changes long 'o' into 'au', in such words as *for, sore, port, corn.* (See Chapter I, Note 2, page 19.) (c) It reduces the short vowels 'e', 'i', 'y', 'u' and 'o', to one long neutral sound in certain words like *herd, bird, absurd, word, myrrh,* so that they all sound exactly alike. (See Chapter III, page 54, and Chapter IV (17), page 70.)

(d) In certain words in long 'u' and 'i', and 'ou', the '-r' has the effect of turning one syllable into two: e.g. we pronounce *pure, cure, lure, fire, spire, tire, flour, lour, sour,* as two syllables each ('*peuər*', '*feuər*', '*flouər*'). And some words with exactly the same sounds are spelt as two syllables, e.g. *ewer, fewer, sewer, higher, trier, liar, cower, power, tower.* This means that, like 'l', 'm' and 'n' (see p. 45, Note 1), 'r' is a 'syllabic consonant'; that is, a consonant that can by itself act as a syllable.

### III. CONSONANTS SOMETIMES MUTE

There are various reasons why some consonants are 'mute', or unpronounced, in certain English words.

(1) A consonant may represent a sound which has died out of English speech. The best example, perhaps, is

the digraph 'gh', which was, no doubt, once sounded, probably with the sound heard in the Urdu word *ghazi*, or with that of 'ch' in the Scotch words *loch*, *nicht*, etc. There is no such sound in modern English; so, though 'gh' remains in the spelling of such words as *plough*, *though*, *high*, *freight*, it is pronounced just as hard 'g', the 'h' being mute (except in *laugh*, *cough*, *rough*, *tough*, where it is sounded as 'f').

(2) When two consonants are difficult to sound together, the tendency in actual speech is to drop one of them. For example, initial 'kn', in such words as *knee*, *knot*, etc. We can easily say *acknowledge*, but it is hard to say *k-nowledge*, sounding both the 'k' and the 'n'. So in such words the 'k' sound died out in speech, though the letter 'k' remained in the spelling. This accounts for the silence of 'p' in such words as *ptomaine*, *psalm*, *empty* ('emti'), *receipt*; of the 'w' in *wretch*, *write*; of the 'g' in *gnaw*, *gnash*, *phlegm*, *sign*; of the first 'm' in *mnemonic*; of the 'n' in *solemn*, *autumn*; and the 'b' in *lamb*, *numb*.

(3) By assimilation, when two similar consonants (like 'k' and 'g', or 'p' and 'b') come together, they are likely to merge, or one to become like the other. For example, *cupboard* is not pronounced 'kup-baurd', but 'kubærd', the 'p' becoming a 'b', that is, really, mute. So *blackguard* is pronounced 'blagaard', the 'ck' merging in the 'g'. This may, too, account for the silence of the 't' in such words as *fasten*, *thistle*, *apostle* (pronounced 'faasn', 'thisl', 'aposl').

(4) In some words the mute consonant is accounted for by pedantic spelling. For example, *debt* and *doubt* come from the Latin words *debita* and *dubitare*. In Old English they were spelt 'dette' and 'douten'; but scholars deliberately inserted the 'b' in both words to show their Latin origin, though the 'b' was never pronounced (but it is pronounced in *debit* and *dubious*). The same is true of the mute 'c' in *victuals*, which was spelt 'vitaille' in old English, and *indict*, formerly spelt 'endite'.

Whatever the cause, the following consonants are mute in certain words :—

(A) 'b'. 'b' is mute in the following words :—

(1) Words ending in 'mb' : *lamb* ('lam'), *jamb*, *limb* ('lim'), *climb* ('kleim'), *dumb*, *crumb*, *numb*, *succumb*, *thumb*, *bomb* ('bom'), *rhomb*, *comb* ('koam'), *clomb*, *catacomb*, *womb* ('woom'), *tomb*, *hecatomb*.

Also in these: *lambing*; *climber*, *climbing* ('kleiming'); *limbless*, *limbed* ('limd'); *dumbly* ('dumli'), *dumbness*; *crumby* ('krumi'); *numbing*, *numbed* ('numd'); *plumbing*, *plumber* ('plumər'); *succumbed*, *succumbing*; *thumbing*, *thumbed* ('thumd'); *bombed*, *bomber*, *bombing* ('boming'); *combed*, *comber* ('koamər'); *entombed* ('entoomd').

Note.—Other words ending with '-mber' sound the 'b': e.g. *amber*, *clamber*, *ember*, *member*, *timber*, *limber*, *number*, *slumber*, *sombre*, etc. Contrast *number* with *plum(b)er*, *timber* with *clim(b)er*, *sombre* with *bom(b)er*.

(2) Words with '-bt': *debt* ('det'), *debtor*, *indebted*; *doubt* ('dout'), *doubting*, *doubter*, *doubtless*, *undoubted*; *subtle* ('sutl').

(B) 'g'. 'g' is mute in the following words :—

(1) Words beginning with 'gn-': *gnat* ('nat'), *gnash*, *gnaw*, *gnarled*, *gneiss*, *gnome*, *gnomic*, *gnostic*, *gnu*.

(2) Words ending with '-gn': *sign* ('sein'), *design*, *resign*, *consign*; *benign*, *malign*, *condign*, *align*, *assign*, *deign* ('dain'), *feign*, *reign*, *arraign* ('arain'), *campaign*, *foreign*, *champaign*, *champagne* ('shampain'), *coign* ('koin'), *cognizant* ('konizant').

Also words formed from these: e.g. *signed*, *signing*, *designer*, *benignest*, *arraignment*, *campaigner*, *maligned*, etc.

(But in such words as these, the 'g' 'speaks': *signify*, *signature*, *significant*, *resignation*, *designate*, *benignant*, *malignant*, *recognize*.)

(3) Words ending with ‘-gm’: *phlegm* (‘flem’), *diaphragm* (‘deiafram’), *paradigm* (‘paradeim’), *apophthegm* (‘apothem’).

(But the ‘g’ is sounded in *phlegmatic*.)

(Note.—In a few words of foreign origin, ‘gn’ is sounded like ‘ny’: e.g. *cognac* (brandy) is pronounced ‘koanyak’; and *signor*, ‘seenyaur’.)

(C) ‘k’. ‘k’ is mute in these words beginning with ‘kn-’: *knave* (‘naiv’), *knapsack*, *knack*, *knee*, *kneel*, *knell*, *knead*, *knit*, *knife*, *knob*, *knot*, *knock*, *knoll*, *know*, *knowledge*, *known*, *unknown*, *knuckle*, *knickerbockers*, *knick*.

(But *acknowledge*.)

(D) ‘l’. ‘l’ is mute in these words:—

(1) Words with ‘lm’: *calm* (‘kaam’), *palm*, *psalm*, *alms*, *balm*, *qualm*, *almond* (‘aamənd’), *salmon* (‘samən’), *holm* (oak).

(Also: *calming*, *calmer*, *calmest*, *calmed*; *palmer*, *palmy*, *palmed*, *palming*; *balmy*, *balmier*, *balmiest*; *psalmist*, *psalmody*.)

(But *balsam*, *psalter*, *psaltery*.) (‘baulsəm’, ‘saultər’.)

(2) Words with ‘-lf’, ‘-lv’: *calf* (‘kaaf’), *half*, *calves* (‘kaavz’), *halves*, *salve* (‘saav’, ointment; but ‘saalv’, save a ship).

(3) Words with ‘-lk’: *walk* (‘wauk’), *talk*, *stalk*, *balk*, *chalk*, *folk* (‘foak’), *yolk*.

Also: *walking*, *walked*, *chalky*, *talkative*, etc. (In *balcony*, *talc*, ‘l’ is sounded.)

(4) Words with ‘-ld’: *would* (‘wūd’), *could*, *should*.

(Note also *colonel*, pronounced ‘kernel’.)

(E) ‘n’. ‘n’ is mute in these words with ‘-mn’: *damn* (‘dam’), *condemn* (‘kondem’), *contemn*, *hymn* (‘him’), *limn*, *solemn*, *column*, *autumn*.



Also: *damning, damned; condemning, condemned; hymning, hymned; limned, limning; columned.*

(But the 'n' is sounded in *damnation, damnable; condemnation; hymnal, hymnology; limner; solemnize, solemnity; columnar; autumnal.*)

(F) 'p'. 'p' is mute in the following words:—

(1) Words beginning with 'ps-': *psalm* ('saam'), *psalter* ('saulter'), *pseudonym* ('seudonim'); and all words beginning with 'pseudo-', false—as *pseudo-Christian*, etc.; *psyche* ('seiki'), *psychology*, and all words beginning with 'psych-', as *psychic*, etc.

(Note.—'ps' in such words represents the Greek letter 'psi' (ψ), which was pronounced as we pronounce 'ps' in such words as *lapse, eclipse, dropsical*. But the English found this a difficult sound as an initial consonant, and so they dropped the 'p' and pronounced it 's'.)

(2) Words beginning with '-pn': e.g. *pneumonia* ('neumoania'), *pneumatic*, and all words beginning with 'pneum-'.

(3) Words beginning with '-pt': e.g. *ptomaine* ('toamain'), *ptarmigan*, *Ptolemy*, *ptosis*, *pterodactyl*, *pteropus*, etc. (Note also *philhisis* ('teisis').)

(4) Words having '-pk-', '-pt-', '-pd-' within: e.g. *bumpkin* ('bumkin'), *pumpkin*, *empty* ('emti'), *tempt*, *attempt*, *contempt*, *symptom*, *peremptory*, *temptation*, *bumptious*, *receipt* ('raseet'), *gumption*, *jumped* ('junt'), *camped*, *romped*.

(Note *cupboard*, pronounced 'kubærd'; *sapphire* ('saf-eir').)

(G) 'h'. 'h' is usually a strong aspirate ('breathing' letter), and care must be taken to pronounce it distinctly in most words where it occurs; for the 'dropping of "aitches"', as it is called, is considered a sure mark of lack of education. (This is one of the characteristic defects of the London 'Cockney' dialect; and this is

not because the Cockney cannot pronounce the 'h' sound, for he as often puts it in where it should not be as leaves it out where it should. He will say, for instance, 'As 'is 'orse been hill?' 'Hit 'as, hawfully hill.' Here is a line from *Punch*, in which the aitches have been omitted for fun: 'It's not the 'oppin' hover 'edges that 'urts the 'orses' 'oofs in 'untin', but the 'ammer, 'ammer, 'ammer on the 'ard, 'igh road.')

(1) **Initial 'h'**: The only words in which initial 'h' is now mute are these: *heir*, *heiress* ('aer', 'aeres'); *hour* ('our'); *honest* ('onest'), *honesty*, *dishonest*; *honour* ('onər'), *honourable*, *honorary*. (Not so long ago it was mute in other words too, such as *hospital*, *humble*, *humour*, *hotel*, but now it is pronounced.)

(2) **Between a strong and a weak vowel**, 'h' is generally mute: e.g. in *annihilate*, *nihilism*, *véheiment*, *véhiclé* ('vee-ikl').

But before an accented vowel, 'h' is often sounded: e.g. *vehicular*, *prehénsile*, *prohibit*, *enhánce*, etc.

(3) But 'h' is mute in *exhaust*, *exhume*, *exhibit*, *exhibition*, *shepherd*, *forehead* ('forəd'), *exhale*, *exhilarate*, *exhort*.

(H) **'gh'**. At the beginning of words, 'gh' is simply 'g' (as in *ghost*, *ghastly*). In eight words (viz. *cough*, *tough*, *rough*, *sough*, *enough*, *laugh*, *laughter*, *draught*) it is sounded as 'f'. In all the rest, 'gh' is mute: e.g. *plough* ('plou'), *bough*, *through*, *though*, *dough*, *thorough*, *high*, *nigh*, *sigh*, *weigh*, *sleigh*, *weight*, *freight*, *height*, *ought*, *thought*, *nought*, *bought*, *caught*, *taught*, *naughty*, *daughter*, *might*, *night*, *light*, *sight*. (See under (I) 'gh' p. 96.)

(I) **'t'**. 't' is sometimes mute:—

(1) in some words of French origin: e.g. *ballet* ('balai'), *bouquet* ('bookai'), *chalet*, *cachet*, *crochet*, *croquet*,

*sobriquet*, *buffet* ('būfai'), *depot*, *sabot*, *Huguenot*, *trait* ('traɪ'), *mortgage* ('maurgəj').

(2) in some words in which 't' comes between 's' and 'n': e.g. *fasten* ('faasn'), *hasten* ('haisn'), *chasten*, *listen*, *glisten*, *christen*, *moisten*, *fastened*, *hastening*, *listener*, *moistened*, *chastened*, *Christmas*, *chestnut*, *waistcoat*, etc. (Note, *mustn't*, 'musnt'.)

(Note.—*hasten* and *basin* are pronounced to rime.)

(3) when 't' comes between 's' and 'l': e.g. *castle* ('kaasl'), *nestle*, *wrestle*, *trestle*, *bristle*, *epistle*, *gristle*, *thisle*, *whistle*, *mistletoe*, *apostle*, *jostle*, *ostler*, *throstle*, *bustle*, *hustle*, *rustle*, *nestled*, *wrestling*, *hustler*, *whistling*, etc.

(But 't' is sounded in *pestle* ('pestəl') as in *pistol*.)

(4) in *often*, *soften* ('aufn' or 'ofn', 'saufn' or 'sofn'), *postman*, *coastguard* ('poasmen', 'koasgaard').

(Note.—When 't' or 'd' is followed by 'l', the effect on the ear is very similar to that produced by 'k' or 'g' followed by 'l'. For example, the 't' in *little* sounds something like 'likkle', and the 'd' in *saddle* sounds something like 'saggle'. Listen for the different sounds of the 't' in *battle* and *batter*, *little* and *litter*, *bottle* and *butter*; and between *addle* and *adding*, *model* and *modest*, *muddled* and *muddled*.)

The sound of 't' before '-n', too, is not the full 't' sound; e.g. say *rotten* and *rotted*, *button* and *butter*, *fatten* and *fatter*. In both cases ('t—l' and 't—n'), the 't' is not the dental (formed by the tip of the tongue against the upper teeth), but is formed by the back of the tongue against the back palate, the breath flowing down both sides of the back of the tongue.)

(J) 'w'. 'w' is not sounded in the following words:—

(1) Words beginning with 'wr-': e.g. *wrap* ('rap'), *wrapper*, *wrack*, *wrangle*, *wraith*, *wrath*, *wreck*, *wreak*, *wreath*, *wren*, *wrench*, *wrestle*, *wretch*, *wretched*,

*wriggle, wright, wring, wrung, wrong, wrinkle, wrist, write, writ, written, wrote, writhe, wrought, wry, awry.*

(2) Certain words beginning with 'wh': e.g. *who, whose, whom* ('hoo', 'hooz', 'hoom'), *whoever, whosoever, whomsoever, whoop, whore, whole, wholly* ('hoal', 'hoal-li').

(In these words, 'wh' is not the digraph (aspirated 'w', 'hw') heard in *which, what*, etc., but 'h' with 'w' mute.)

(3) A few odd words: viz. *sword* ('saurd'), *answer* ('aansər'), *boatswain* ('boasn'), *coxswain* ('koksɪn'), *gunwale* ('gunl'), *leeward* ('looərd').

(K) 's'. 's' is not sounded in:—

(1) *aisle, isle, island* ('eil', 'eilənd'), *demesne* ('də-main'), *viscount* ('veikount'), *punsne* ('peuni').

(2) Some words of French origin: e.g. *corps* ('kaur'), *débris* ('daibree'), *chassis* ('shasee'), *apropos* ('aapropoa').

(L) 'c', 'd', 'm', 'ch'. These letters are mute in a few odd words:—

(1) 'c':

(a) When preceded by 's' ('sc'), and followed by 'i', 'y' or 'e': e.g. *science, scythe, scene, crescent, acquiesce*, etc. (See list under 'c' ('sc'), on p. 85.)

(b) Odd words: e.g. *muscle* ('musl'), *victuals* ('vitls'), *indict* ('indeit'), *corpuscule* ('kaurpusl'), *ctenoid* ('teenoid').

(2) 'd': 'd' is mute in *handsome* ('hansəm'), *handkerchief* ('hankerchif'), *Wednesday* ('wenzdi'), *Windsor* ('winzər'), *riband* (pronounced like the other spelling of the word—ribbon, 'ribn').

(Note.—In actual speech, the 'd' is often dropped from *grandfather* ('granfaadhər'), *bandmaster, handbox, bandsmen, friends, landlord, kindness*, etc.)

(3) 'm': mute in *mnemonics* ('nimoniks').

(4) 'ch': 'ch' is mute in *drachm* ('dram') and in *yacht* ('yot').

#### IV. SUMMARY

We have now reviewed all the consonants and consonantal digraphs, except 'd', 'f', 'm', 't', 'v' and 'z'. These are quite regular in their use, and so need no comment. The rest, though not so irregular as the vowels, do not all comply with the phonetic rule, 'one sign, one sound; one sound, one sign'. In a phonetic system of spelling the following changes would have to be made.

(1) Three consonants ('c', 'q', 'x'), and three digraphs ('ph', 'gh', 'rh') would be dropped. They are superfluous, for they are doing work already done by other consonantal signs. Hard 'c' is simply 'k'; soft 'c' is 's'; 'q' with mute 'e' is 'k', and 'qu' is 'kw'; 'x' is 'ks', or 'gz'; 'ph' is 'f'; 'rh' is nothing but plain 'r'; and 'gh' is simply 'g', in a few words 'f', or is mute.

(2) The soft sounds of 'g' and 's' are already represented by 'j' and 'z' respectively; and so words like *gentle*, *agent*, *page*, would be spelt 'jentl', 'aijənt', 'paij'; and *wise*, *these*, *pose*, *pleasant*, would be spelt 'weiz', 'dheez', 'poaz', 'pleznt'.

(3) The soft sound of 'ch' would be handed over to 'sh'; so that such words as *chaise*, *machine* and *douche* would be spelt 'shaiz', 'məsheen', 'doosh'. The hard sound of 'ch' would be taken over by 'k'; so that such words as *chasm*, *aching*, *monarch*, would be spelt 'kasm', 'aiking', 'monærk'.

(4) For the soft sounds of 'th' and 'sh', new signs would have to be used. Without inventing any new letters, this could be done by using 'dh' for soft 'th',

and 'zh' for soft 'sh'. Then such words as *then*, *feather*, *breathe*, would be spelt 'dhen', 'fedhər', 'breedh'; and such words as *leisure*, *explosion*, *rouge*, would be spelt 'lezhər', 'ekspləazhn', 'roozh'.

(5) The letters 'y' and 'w' would be kept as consonants only, and would have no vowel sounds. The vowel sounds of 'y' would be taken over by 'i' and 'ei'; and such words as *myth*, *style*, would be spelt 'mith', 'steil'; and 'u' would be used in digraphs instead of 'w' (in 'aw', 'ow', and 'ew'), so that such words as *straw*, *how*, *few*, would be spelt 'strau', 'hou', 'feu'.

(6) All letters that have become mute in certain words would be left out of those words altogether; so, *lamb* would be spelt 'lam'; *honest*, 'onest'; *sign*, 'sein'; *gnat*, 'nat'; *knock*, 'nok'; *folk*, 'foak'; *condemn*, 'kondem'; *psychic*, 'seikik'; *pneumonia*, 'neumoania'; *right*, 'reit'; *plough*, 'plou'; *naught*, 'naut'; *rheumatism*, 'roomətizm'.

Without inventing any new consonantal signs, we should then have an alphabet of consonants as follows: 'b', 'd', 'f', 'g', 'h', 'j', 'k', 'l', 'm', 'n', 'p', 'r', 's', 't', 'v', 'w', 'y', 'z', 'ch', 'sh', 'zh', 'th', 'dh', 'wh', 'ng', 'nk', ('ks', 'gz'). (See the Appendix on 'Simplified Spelling'.)

(Note.—To distinguish between the pronunciation of such words as *singer* and *linger*, *longing* and *longer*, 'ngg' might be used in the latter of each pair; thus 'singer', but 'linger'; 'longing', but 'longger'.)

#### V. DIFFERENT SPELLINGS OF THE CONSONANTAL SOUNDS

1. 'b': *bond* (initial), *ebb* (final), *buoy*, *cupboard*.
2. 'd': *dog*, *ladder*, *called*, *horde*, *could*.
3. 'f': *fame*, *stuff*, *phrase*, *laugh*, *half*, *often* ('aufn' or 'ofn'), *sapphire*, *lieutenant* (where 'ieu' is sounded as 'ef').

4. 'g': *game, egg, ghost, guard, burgher, fatigue.*
5. 'h': *hold, whole.*
6. 'j': *jam, gist, George, judge, judgment, soldier, gaol.*
7. 'k': *kill, cold, accost, black, biscuit, quench, liquor, grotesque, ache, hough (also spelt hock).*
8. 'l': *last, fill, island, aisle, gazelle, seraglio ('seraallo'), Woolwich.*
9. 'm': *make, stammer, hymn, numb, programme, phlegm, drachm ('dram').*
10. 'n': *pen, inn, feign, knight, gnat, John, Wednesday, riband, borne, Anne, coign.*
11. 'p': *pain, happy, steppe.*
12. 'r': *ride, marrow, rhythm, wrong.*
13. 's': *saw, miss, dense, cell, prance, scene, coalesce, schism, quartz, sword, listen, isthmus, psalm, crevasse.*
14. 't': *tell, battle, gazette, Thames and thyme, looked, two, debt, indict, receipt, yacht, caste.*
15. 'v': *veil, have, navy, of, halve, nephew.*
16. 'w': *wine, languid, choir ('kweir').*
17. 'y': *yet, use, union, hallelujah, signor ('seenyaur').*
18. 'z': *zeal, buzz, his, rose, scissors, Xerxes, furze, Wednesday, venison ('venzen'), Czar, Tsar, business ('biznəs').*
19. 'ch': *church, niche, catch, nature, question, righteous, violon-cello ('chelo').*
20. 'ng': *thing, finger, tongue.*
21. 'nk': *thank, anchor, zinc, banquet, handkerchief.*
22. 'th' (hard): *breath, Matthew.*
23. 'th' (soft): *then, soothe.*

24. 'sh': *shout, Asia, pension, moustache, fuchsia, session, fashion, officiate, facial, ocean, conscience, schedule, negotiate, nation, chaise, sure, tissue.*
25. 'zh': *leisure, seizure, vision, usual, regime, rouge.*
26. 'wh': *while, whet.*

# VI. THE SAME SPELLING WITH DIFFERENT CONSONANTAL SOUNDS

- 'c': *cat, city, cello* ('cheloə').
- 'cc': *accuse* ('akeuz'), *accent* ('aksənt').
- 'ch': *church, chasm* ('kazm'), *chivalry* ('shivəlri'), *drachm* ('dram'—mute).
- 's': *gas* ('gas'), *has* ('haz').
- 'sc': *scene* ('seen'), *scarce* ('skaers').
- 'sch': *scheme* ('skeem'), *schedule* ('shedeul'), *schism* ('sizm').
- 'si': *conversion* ('konvershən'), *confusion* ('konfeuzhən').
- 'ge': *get, gem* ('jem'), *rouge* ('roozh').
- 'gi': *give, ginger* ('jinjər').
- 'gh': *ghost* ('goast'), *laugh* ('laf' or 'laaf'), *hough* ('hok'), *though* ('thoa'—mute).
- 'qu': *queen* ('kween'), *liquor* ('likər').
- 'j': *juice, hallelujah* ('halilooyaa').
- 'ti': *nation* ('naishən'), *question* ('kweschən'), *tip, transition* ('tranzizhən').
- 'th': *thick* ('th' hard), *these* ('th' soft—'dh'), *thyme* ('teim').
- 'x': *extra* ('ekstrə'), *example* ('egzaampl'), *xylophone* ('zeilofoan').
- 'f': *if, of* ('ov').



## CHAPTER VI

### THE SAME SOUNDS WITH DIFFERENT SPELLINGS (HOMOPHONES AND RIMES)

WE have learnt from our study of the English vowels and consonants how often confusion is caused by the expression of the same sound by several signs, instead of always by one sign. Let us study this frequent breach of the rule, 'one sound, one sign', in a little more detail in this chapter, which shall be devoted to examples of different words which are pronounced alike but spelt differently; that is, they sound alike to the ear when spoken, but appear different to the eye when seen in print or writing.

For example, if you hear these three words spoken, you cannot tell (except from the context) which is which, for they all sound exactly alike: *vain*, *vane*, *vein*. Of course, if the speaker says, 'The surgeon opened a *v* . . .', you know he means *vein*; if he says, 'The *v* . . . on the church tower points north', he means *vane*, a weathercock; and if he says, 'My efforts were all in *v* . . .', he means *vain*. That is, you can tell from the context which word is meant. In reading, you can at once distinguish these words by their different spellings; and you may conclude that divers spellings of the same sound is an advantage. If it is, that small advantage is heavily counterbalanced by the very great disadvantages of irregular spelling.

In this chapter are given examples of (1) different words pronounced exactly alike, but differently spelt (such words are called 'homophones', which means 'with the same sound'); and of (2) different words which rime together, and yet are spelt differently.

I. HOMOPHONES : WORDS SOUNDED EXACTLY ALIKE, BUT  
DIFFERENTLY SPELT

Say these words aloud, so that you can hear the similarity of their sounds ; and learn their spelling off by heart.

Long ' a ' sound ( ' ai ' ) or with ' -r ' ( ' ae(r) ' ) :—

*vain* (conceited), *vane* (weathercock), *vein* (blood-vessel).  
*rain* (water), *rein* (of horse), *reign* (rule).  
*fane* (temple), *feign* (pretend), *fain* (glad).  
*lane* (narrow road), *lain* (past part. of ' to lie ' ).  
*mane* (of horse), *main* (principal ; ocean).  
*pain* (hurt), *pane* (of glass).  
*plain* (clear ; level), *plane* (flat surface ; tool).  
*wane* (decrease), *wain* (waggon).  
*champagne* (wine), *champaign* (open country).  
*fair* (just), *fare* (passage money).  
*hair* (of head), *hare* (animal).  
*air* (atmosphere), *heir* (to property ; ' h ' mute), *e'er*  
 (ever).  
*stair* (steps), *stare* (look).  
*pair* (two), *pare* (cut), *pear* (fruit).  
*way* (road), *weigh* (in scales).  
*pray* (ask), *prey* (victim).  
*wait* (delay), *weight* (heaviness).  
*straight* (direct), *strait* (narrow).  
*great* (big), *grate* (fireplace).  
*wave* (of sea), *waive* (relinquish, forgo).  
*waste* (squander), *waist* (middle).  
*bare* (naked), *bear* (carry).  
*tare* (weed), *tear* (rend).  
*pale* (white), *pail* (bucket).  
*vale* (valley), *veil* (for face).  
*hale* (drag), *hail* (greet ; ice-drops).  
*tale* (story), *tail* (of animal).  
*jail* (prison), *gaol* (ditto).  
*bail* (security), *bale* (evil ; bundle).  
*slay* (kill), *sleigh* (sledge).

*bay* (of sea), *bey* (title).  
*tray* (flat vessel), *trait* (characteristic).  
*day* (light), *dey* (title).  
*place* (locality), *placce* (fish).  
*raise* (lift up), *rase* (or *raze*) (pull down, destroy).  
*faint* (swoon), *feint* (pretence).  
*nave* (of church), *knave* (rascal).  
*stake* (wooden post), *steak* (cut of beef).  
*brake* (check on wheel), *break* (smash).  
*fay* (fairy), *fey* (fated to die).

Short 'a' sound ('a') :—

*jam* (fruit conserve), *jamb* (side post of door).  
*lam* (thrash), *lamb* (young sheep).  
*rapt* (transported), *wrapt* (enclosed), *rapped* (tapped).  
*cannon* (big gun), *canon* (rule).  
*canvas* (coarse cloth), *canvass* (solicit votes).  
*mantle* (cloak), *mantel* (shelf above fireplace; mantel-piece).  
*palate* (roof of mouth), *pallet* (light bed), *palette* (of painter).  
*gamble* (play for money), *gambol* (to frisk about).

Broad 'a' sound ('aa') :—

*cast* (throw), *caste* (social class).  
*past* (not present), *passed* (past tense of verb).

Long 'e' sound ('ee') :—

*see* (look), *sea* (ocean).  
*be* (exist), *bee* (insect).  
*we* (pronoun), *wee* (small).  
*reed* (rush), *read* (present tense of verb; a book).  
*meed* (reward), *mead* (meadow).  
*need* (want), *knead* (work up dough).  
*seed* (of plants), *cede* (give up).  
*leaf* (of tree), *lief* (willing).  
*week* (seven days), *weak* (feeble).

*peak* (mountain), *pique* (vexation).  
*heel* (of foot), *heal* (cure).  
*peel* (skin), *peal* (of bells).  
*steel* (metal), *steal* (rob).  
*wheel* (of cart), *weal* (welfare).  
*sealing* (with wax), *ceiling* (of room).  
*seem* (appear), *seam* (join).  
*teem* (abound), *team* (of bullocks ; hockey team).  
*seen* (past part. of ' to see '), *scene* (view).  
*dean* (cleric), *dene* (valley).  
*mean* (intend, etc.), *men* (bearing).  
*been* (past part. of ' to be '), *bean* (vegetable).  
*leek* (onion), *leak* (hole).  
*flee* (run away), *flea* (insect).  
*tea* (beverage), *tee* (mound, in golf).  
*key* (of lock), *quay* (wharf).  
*beech* (tree), *beach* (shore).  
*breech* (linder part), *breach* (gap).  
*peace* (quiet), *piece* (part).  
*beer* (beverage), *bier* (stand for coffin).  
*peer* (equal), *pier* (breakwater ; mole).  
*tear* (weeping), *tier* (row of seats).  
*dear* (precious), *deer* (stag).  
*meet* (encounter), *meat* (flesh food), *mete* (measure).  
*feet* (plural of ' foot '), *feat* (deed).  
*beet* (vegetable), *beat* (strike).  
*grieves* (mourns), *greaves* (armour for legs).

Short ' e ' sound ( ' e ' ) :—

*led* (past tense of ' to lead '), *lead* (metal).  
*red* (colour), *read* (past tense of ' to read ').  
*bred* (trained), *bread* (wheaten food).  
*medal* (coin), *meddle* (interfere).  
*reck* (care), *wreck* (of ship).  
*sell* (give for money), *cell* (small room).  
*seller* (shopman), *cellar* (underground room).  
*gemmy* (covered with gems), *jemmy* (burglar's tool).

*when* (adverb), *wen* (tumour).  
*berry* (fruit), *bury* (inter).  
*session* (sitting), *cession* (ceding).  
*rest* (quiet), *wrest* (snatch).  
*guest* (visitor), *guessed* (past tense of 'to guess').  
*wet* (moist), *whet* (sharpen).  
*metal* (as iron), *mettle* (courage).  
*whether* (if), *wether* (sheep), *weather* (state of atmosphere).  
*wretch* (miserable person), *retch* (vomit).  
*assent* (agreement), *ascent* (rise).

Long neutral vowel sound ('-er') :—

*herd* (flock), *heard* (past tense of 'to hear').  
*fir* (tree), *fur* (hair of animals).  
*berth* (bed), *birth* (being born).  
*pearl* (gem), *purl* (murmur, as stream).  
*earn* (deserve), *urn* (vessel).  
*desert* (abandon), *dessert* (fruit at dinner).  
*kernel* (of nut), *colonel* (of regiment).  
*surplus* (excess), *surplice* (priest's robe).

Long 'i' sound ('ei') :—

*mite* (small coin), *might* (strength).  
*bite* (with teeth), *bight* (bay).  
*height* (length upwards), *hight* (called—Old English).  
*white* (colour), *wight* (person).  
*night* (darkness), *knight* (warrior).  
*high* (tall), *hie* (hasten), *Hi!* (exclamation; 'Hello!').  
*right* (correct), *rite* (ceremony).  
*by* (near), *bye* (subordinate, as in 'leg-bye'), *buy* (purchase).  
*rime* (hoar frost), *rhyme* (agreement in sound; also spelt 'rime').  
*while* (during), *wile* (trick).  
*wine* (drink), *whine* (complain).  
*tire* (weary), *tyre* (rim of wheel).  
*hire* (wage), *higher* (taller).

*prize* (reward), *prise* (force up ; also spelt ' prize ' ).  
*tied* (fastened), *tide* (of sea).  
*die* (expire), *dye* (colour).  
*slight* (slender), *sleight* (of hand ; quickness).  
*isle* (island), *aisle* (of a church).  
*bridle* (of horse), *bridal* (marriage).  
*dying* (expiring), *dyeing* (colouring).  
*lightning* (flash), *lightening* (making less heavy).  
*style* (manner), *stile* (set of steps).

Short ' i ' sound ( ' i ' ) :—

*gild* (paint with gold), *guild* (a society ; craft guild)  
*gilt* (imitation gold), *guilt* (blame).  
*billed* (presented with bill), *build* (erect).  
*him* (pronoun), *hymn* (sacred song).  
*limb* (of body), *limn* (draw).  
*ring* (to sound), *wring* (twist).  
*grisly* (grim), *grizzly* (grey ; kind of bear).

Long ' o ' sound ( ' oa ' ) :—

*load* (burden), *lode* (vein of metal).  
*road* (street), *rode* (past tense of ' to ride ' ).  
*loan* (money lent), *lone* (alone).  
*so* (thus), *sow* (seed), *sew* (with thread).  
*slow* (tardy), *sloe* (a bush).  
*sole* (only), *soul* (spirit).  
*bowl* (vessel), *bole* (base of tree trunk).  
*bow* (for arrows), *beau* (dandy), *boh ?* (exclamation).  
*roll* (revolve), *role* (actor's part).  
*pole* (long stick), *poll* (election).  
*hole* (opening), *whole* (sound ; unbroken).  
*nose* (nostrils), *knows* (has knowledge of).  
*rose* (flower), *rows* (lines ; propels a boat).  
*born* (began life), *borne* (carried), *bound* (goal ; limit).  
*cold* (chilly), *coaled* (supplied with coal).  
*bold* (brave), *bowled* (out in cricket).  
*bolder* (braver), *boulder* (big rock).

*told* (informed), *tolled* (a bell ; rang).  
*mode* (fashion), *mowed* (cut grass).  
*moan* (in sorrow), *mown* (cut).  
*groan* (in pain), *grown* (developed).  
*mote* (speck of dust), *moat* (ditch round castle).  
*grocer* (provision merchant), *grosser* (thicker ; fatter).  
*yoke* (of oxen), *yolk* (of egg).  
*brooch* (ornament), *broach* (to pierce).

Short 'o' sound ('o') :—

*not* (negative), *knot* (tie).  
*profit* (gain), *prophet* (seer).

Long 'u' sound ('eu') :—

*due* (owing), *dew* (on grass).  
*yew* (a tree), *you* (pers. pronoun), *ewe* (sheep).  
*yews* (trees), *use* (make use of).  
*new* (novel), *knew* (past tense of 'to know'), *gnu*  
 (ox-like antelope).  
*hew* (chop), *hue* (colour) ; *hews*, *hues* ; *hewed*, *hued*.  
*cruel* (harsh), *crewel* (thin wool thread).  
*muse* (meditate), *mews* (stables ; cries like cat).  
*review* (examine), *revue* (variety entertainment).  
*duel* (combat), *dual* (double).

Short 'u' sound ('u') :—

*sum* (total), *some* (a few).  
*sun* (in sky), *sun* (child).  
*tun* (cask), *ton* (weight).  
*nun* (female religious recluse), *none* (not any).  
*won* (gained), *one* (number).  
*done* (accomplished), *dun* (brown colour).  
*burrow* (dig), *borough* (city).  
*skull* (head), *scull* (row a boat).  
*current* (stream), *currant* (dried grape).  
*muscle* (sinew), *mussel* (shell-fish).  
*plum* (fruit), *plumb* (to fathom).

'oo' sound ('oo') :—

*too* (overmuch), *to* (preposition), *two* (number).  
*wood* (of tree), *would* (verb).  
*root* (of plant), *route* (way).  
*hoop* (ring), *whoop* (shout).  
*flue* (chimney), *flew* (did fly).  
*clue* (fact serving as guide), *clew* (ball of thread).  
*cruise* (voyage), *crews* (sailors of ships), *cruse* (bottle).  
*bruise* (wound), *brews* (makes beer).

'ou' sound ('ou') :—

*fowl* (bird), *foul* (dirty).  
*bow* (bend), *bough* (branch).  
*fowler* (hunter), *fouler* (more foul).  
*flower* (of plant), *flour* (meal).  
*counsel* (advice), *council* (assembly).

'aw' sound ('au') :—

*awl* (boring tool), *all* (everything).  
*haul* (drag), *hall* (large room).  
*ball* (sphere), *bawl* (shout).  
*call* (summon), *caul* (small cap, etc.).  
*pause* (wait), *paws* (animal's feet).  
*clause* (short sentence), *claws* (long nails).  
*cause* (origin), *caws* (makes noise like crow).  
*taut* (tight), *taught* (past tense of 'to teach').  
*fawn* (young deer), *faun* (wood spirit).  
*cord* (string), *chord* (of music).  
*fourth* (number), *forth* (out).  
*hoard* (save), *horde* (tribe; host).  
*story* (tale), *storey* (of building).  
*oar* (of boat), *ore* (of metal), *or*, (conjunction), *o'er* (over).  
*boar* (pig), *bore* (drill holes).  
*board* (of wood), *bored* (wearied).  
*wore* (past tense of 'to wear'), *war* (combat).  
*pore* (of skin), *pour* (water out).



*tore* (past tense of 'to tear'), *tor* (rocky peak).  
*morn* (morning), *mourn* (lament); *morning*, *mourning*.  
*alter* (change), *altar* (for sacrifice).

'oi' sound ('oi') :—

*boy* (child), *buoy* (anchored for ships).  
*coin* (money), *coign* ('of vantage').

All the above like-sounding but diversely spelt words are homophones. They are to be distinguished from 'homonyms' (literally, 'of the same name'), which are distinct words of different origin, but not only pronounced but also spelt exactly alike. For example, *peer* may be either a verb (to look closely) or a noun (an equal, and a Member of the House of Lords); and *sole* may mean alone, or the bottom (sole) of the foot, or a kind of flat fish. Although such words have not much to do with this chapter, a list of some of them may be given here.

### Homonyms

<i>air</i> (atmosphere; tune; manner).	<i>cleave</i> (split; cling to).
<i>arch</i> (doorway; innocently roguish).	<i>count</i> (reckon; a title).
<i>bale</i> (bundle; evil).	<i>cricket</i> (game; insect).
<i>base</i> (foundation; low, mean).	<i>die</i> (expire; stamp).
<i>bay</i> (of sea; a tree; 'dog's bark).	<i>dole</i> (grief; gift).
<i>bear</i> (to carry; wild animal).	<i>fair</i> (beautiful; just; place of sale).
<i>bound</i> (tied up; ready to go).	<i>grave</i> (tomb; serious).
<i>box</i> (chest; fight; a tree).	<i>hail</i> (ice-shower; call to).
<i>brook</i> (stream; endure).	<i>hamper</i> (basket; hinder).
<i>cape</i> (mantle; promontory).	<i>league</i> (3 miles; alliance).
<i>case</i> (chest; condition; law-suit).	<i>loom</i> (weaving machine; look dark).
	<i>mail</i> (armour; post).
	<i>meet</i> (encounter; fit).
	<i>mint</i> (a herb; place of coining).

<i>moor</i> (a heath ; man of Morocco).	<i>race</i> (run ; human race).
<i>nap</i> (sleep ; surface of cloth).	<i>rent</i> (torn ; hire of house).
<i>page</i> (of book ; boy servant).	<i>rifle</i> (gun ; steal).
<i>pile</i> (heap ; post).	<i>ring</i> (circle ; ring bell).
<i>pine</i> (a tree ; long for).	<i>rock</i> (stone ; oscillate).
<i>pitch</i> (tar ; height of voice ; cricket pitch).	<i>shed</i> (outhouse ; let fall).
<i>pore</i> (hole in skin ; study).	<i>smack</i> (strike ; fishing boat).
<i>pulse</i> (vegetables ; beat of heart).	<i>sound</i> (noise ; sea straits).
	<i>stern</i> (severe ; back of ship).
	<i>swallow</i> (bird ; eat).
	<i>tender</i> (soft, gentle ; offer).

## II. WORDS THAT RIME THOUGH DIFFERENTLY SPELT

So far our examples have been 'homophones'—words that are exactly the same in sound in spite of their different spellings. But differently spelt words that rime are equally good examples of the fact that in English one sound is often expressed by more than one sign.

What is 'rime' (or 'rhyme', as it is usually, but incorrectly, spelt) ?

Words are said to rime when they have (a) the same vowel sound in the accented syllable, and (b) the same consonantal sound immediately following it (e.g. *cat*, *hat* ; *bog*, *dog*). (Of course the consonants before the vowels must be different, or you would have, not two words riming, but the same word.)

For example, *keep* rimes with *weep*, for both words have the long 'e' vowel sound, and both end with 'p' ; so with *boom*, *gloom* ; *gate*, *fate* ; *town*, *clown* ; *abide*, *confide* ; *gale*, *fail* ; *contentment*, *resentment*. (When words rime in two syllables, they are called double, or 'feminine', rimes ; e.g. *sorrow*, *morrow* ; *feather*, *weather* ; *heaven*, *seven*.)

Now rime refers only to sound ; it has nothing to do with spelling. Hence differently spelt words like *gate* and *straight*, *seem* and *scream*, *see* and *quay*, *fire* and *choir*,

*now* and *plough*, *daft* and *laughed*, *off* and *cough*, *journal* and *colonel*, *much* and *touch*, are perfectly good rimes. In a phonetic system of spelling this differentiation, of course, would be impossible, because every sound would be always represented by the same sign. But just because English spelling is far from being phonetic, it is not only possible but actual, and is a further proof that English spelling does not represent English pronunciation.

#### Examples :

These examples are not exhaustive, but they are sufficient to illustrate further in how many different spellings the same sound can be represented in English.

#### 1. Long 'a' sound ('ai') :—

- (a) *a*, *may*, *grey*, *weigh*, *trait* ('t' mute), *yea*.
- (b) *made*, *paid*, *prayed*, *weighed*, *obeyed*.
- (c) *safe*, *warf*.
- (d) *wage*, *gauge*.
- (e) *wake*, *break*, *ache*.
- (f) *tale*, *mail*, *veil*, *gaol*.
- (g) *lame*, *aim* ; *game*, *claim*.
- (h) *bane*, *pain*, *rein*, *seine*, *feign*, *campaign*, *champagne*, *demesne*.
- (i) *chase*, *grace*, *plaice*, *bass*.
- (j) *graze*, *raise*, *plays*, *greys*, *weighs*.
- (k) *late*, *bait*, *great*, *straight*, *fête*.
- (l) *brave*, *waive* ; *rave*, *glaiue*.

#### Long 'a' with '-r' ('aer') :—

*rare*, *chair*, *there*, *pear*, *heir*, *mayor*, *prayer*, *e'er*

#### 2. Broad 'a' sound ('aa') :—

- (a) *art*, *heart*.
- (b) *can't*, *aunt*.
- (c) *bar*, *are*, *bazaar*.
- (d) *bark*, *clerk*.
- (e) *garth*, *hearth*.
- (f) *laugh*, *calf*.
- (g) *laughter*, *rafter*.

3 Short 'a' sound ('a') :—

- (a) *mad, plaid.*
- (b) *gammon, salmon.*
- (c) *sat, plait.*

4. Long 'e' sound ('ee') :—

- (a) *we, bee, tea, key ; he, tree, sea, quay.*
- (b) *leech, each ; beech, teach.*
- (c) *seed, bead, swede, invalid ; weed, lead (present tense), rede (advice).*
- (d) *reef, leaf, chief ; beef, sheaf, grief.*
- (e) *league, intrigue.*
- (f) *seek, weak, shriek, unique, eke.*
- (g) *feel, meal, stele, imbecile ; steeled, sealed, congealed, yield.*
- (h) *seem, gleam, scheme ; teem, cream, theme.*
- (i) *keen, clean, dene, mien, machine ; been, mean, marine.*
- (j) *fiend, gleaned, preened, machined.*
- (k) *keep, cheap, weep, heap ; steeple, people.*
- (l) *deer, fear, mere, tier, weir ; steer, dear, here, bier.*
- (m) *leered, seared, weird.*
- (n) *eerie, dreary, beery, theory.*
- (o) *geese, obese, grease, fleece, niece, police.*
- (p) *least, priest, fleeced, greased, policed.*
- (q) *trees, cheese, breeze, seize, chemise, please.*
- (r) *feet, wheat, mete, receipt ; greeted, cheated, foetid, receipted.*
- (s) *sleeve, weave, believe, receive, reeves, greaves, grieves, deceives.*
- (t) *teeth, wreath ; seethes, breathes*

5. Short 'e' sound ('e') :—

- (a) *wed, dead, said.*
- (b) *fret, threat, debt.*
- (c) *gem, condemn, phlegm.*
- (d) *bend, friend.*

- (e) *rent, leant.*
  - (f) *wept, leapt.*
  - (g) *rest, breast, guest, messed.*
  - (h) *penny, many.*
  - (i) *shepherd, leopard.*
  - (j) *death, saith.*
  - (k) *seven, heaven.*
  - (l) *pleasure, leisure.*
6. Long 'i' sound ('ei') :—
- (a) *hi !, tie, cry, nigh, buy, eye ; lying, tying, sighing, buying.*
  - (b) *wide, tried, guide, guyed, eyed.*
  - (c) *mile, style, guile, aisle, isle.*
  - (d) *child, piled, styled, beguiled.*
  - (e) *crime, thyme.*
  - (f) *wine, sign.*
  - (g) *bind, mined, signed ; find, lined, designed, wynd.*
  - (h) *pipe, type ; piper, typer.*
  - (i) *crisis, phthisis, lysis, ices ; rice, gneiss (a rock).*
  - (j) *wise, lies, prize, guise, buys, sighs, eyes.*
  - (k) *kite, light, height, indict ; site, knight, sleight.*
  - (l) *alive, gyve.*
  - (m) *blithe, scythe.*
  - (n) *fire, tyre, higher, buyer, liar, choir, crier, prior ; dire, byre, nigher ; briar, trier.*
7. Short 'i' sound ('i') :—
- (a) *rich, nicke, pitch, wych (-elm) ; which, stitch, lych (-gate).*
  - (b) *bitches, breeches, niches.*
  - (c) *cliff, hieroglyph.*
  - (d) *tic (neuralgia), sick ; ticked, afflict.*
  - (e) *will, distil ; silt, built.*
  - (f) *killed, gild, build.*
  - (g) *rim, limb, hymn, limn.*
  - (h) *inn, begin ; finny, guinea ; inch, lynch ; linnet, minute.*

- (i) *winked, distinct ; blinked, extinct.*
  - (j) *minx, lynx, rinks.*
  - (k) *tipsy, gypsy.*
  - (l) *kissed, mist, tryst ; twist, amethyst.*
  - (m) *history, mystery.*
  - (n) *gristle, missal.*
  - (o) *pith, myth*
  - (p) *dizzy, busy.*
  - (q) *give, sieve.*
  - (r) *fix, bricks, Styx (river of Hades).*
  - (s) *pity, pretty.*
8. Long ' o ' sound ( ' oa ' ) :—
- (a) *no, oh !, flow, toe, dough, sew, beau.*
  - (b) *bowman, yeoman, Roman.*
  - (c) *coach, brooch.*
  - (d) *rode, toad, crowed, shewed.*
  - (e) *poke, soak, yolk ; woke, oak, folk.*
  - (f) *pole, roll, foal, bowl, soul.*
  - (g) *roller, bowler, molar, coaler.*
  - (h) *gold, tolled, foaled, mould, (high-) souled.*
  - (i) *colder, shoulder.*
  - (j) *home, roam, comb.*
  - (k) *bone, loan, own, sewn.*
  - (l) *only, lonely.*
  - (m) *hope, soap ; ropy, soapy ; doped, soaped.*
  - (n) *nose, goes, throws, owes, shews.*
  - (o) *dose, gross ; closer, grosser, grocer.*
  - (p) *post, boast, ghost.*
  - (q) *mote, goat ; rote, boat.*
  - (r) *both, oath.*
  - (s) *groves, loaves.*
9. Short ' o ' sound ( ' o ' ) :—
- (a) *hob, swab ; gobble, squabble ; mobbing, swabbing ; robin, bobbin.*
  - (b) *botch, watch ; notched, watched ; Scotchman, watchman.*

- (c) *pod, squad ; nodding, wadding ; coddle, model, swaddle.*
- (d) *off, cough ; doffing, coughing.*
- (e) *solid, squalid.*
- (f) *hollow, swallow ; follow, wallow.*
- (g) *block, hough (also spelt hock).*
- (h) *from, bomb.*
- (i) *romp, swamp ; prompt, swamped.*
- (j) *on, gone, swan, John.*
- (k) *fond, wand, blonde ; ponder, wander.*
- (l) *font, want.*
- (m) *college, knowledge.*
- (n) *hop, swap ; chopped, swapped ; lopping, swapping.*
- (o) *moral, quarrel, sorrel, laurel.*
- (p) *sorry, quarry.*
- (q) *foreign, warren.*
- (r) *torrent, warrant.*
- (s) *hot, squat, yacht ; potter, squatter, yachtster ; knot, what.*
- (t) *bottle, wattle.*
- (u) *bosh, wash ; goloshes, washes.*

10. Long ' u ' sound ( ' eu ' ) :—

- (a) *due, few, view, lieu, you, gnu.*
- (b) *feud, sued, lewd, viewed, hewed.*
- (c) *presume, rheum.*
- (d) *tune, hewn, impugn.*
- (e) *cure, skewer, truer, reviewer.*
- (f) *spruce, deuce, diffuse (adj.)*
- (g) *news, dues, views, fuse ; pews, hues, diffuse (verb).*
- (h) *mute, suit, newt.*
- (i) *duty, beauty.*
- (j) *truth, youth, sleuth.*

11. Short ' u ' sound ( ' u ' ) :—

- (a) *such, touch, hutch.*
- (b) *mud, blood ; bud, flood.*

- (c) *muddy, study, bloody.*
- (d) *muddied, flooded, studied.*
- (e) *bluff, rough ; huff, enough ; cuff, tough.*
- (f) *dusk, obfusc, brusque.*
- (g) *dull, annul.*
- (h) *rum, dumb, some ; sum, come, crumb.*
- (i) *run, done, ton ; gun, one, son.*
- (j) *funny, money ; sunny, honey.*
- (k) *fund, shunned.*
- (l) *sung, tongue, young, among.*
- (m) *plunge, sponge ; lunged, sponged.*
- (n) *drunk, monk.*
- (o) *blunt, front.*
- (p) *thunder, wonder ; blundering, wondering ; sun-  
dered, wondered.*
- (q) *dunce, once.*
- (r) *bunion, onion.*
- (s) *flunkey, monkey.*
- (t) *hummock, stomach.*
- (u) *hurry, worry ; flurried, worried.*
- (v) *furrow, borough.*
- (w) *cut, butt ; buzz, does ; crux, ducks.*
- (x) *crust, discussed.*
- (y) *wuther (of wind), brother ; wuthering, mothering.*

12. The 'oo' sound ('oo') :—

- (a) *too, do, canoe, blue, through, coup, debut ; woo,  
who, shoe, two ; to, glue, crew.*
- (b) *food, rude.*
- (c) *fool, ghoul*
- (d) *gloom, tomb, whom ; room, womb, plume.*
- (e) *coop, soup, troupe ; stoop, croup ; hoop, roup.*
- (f) *poor, your ; moor, tour.*
- (g) *boot, route, flute, fruit.*
- (h) *ooze, whose, shoes, blues ; snooze, lose, flues, canoes.*
- (i) *tooth, uncouth, truth.*
- (j) *smooth, soothe.*



## 13. The short 'oo' sound (ū) :—

- (a) *wood, could ; stood, should.*
- (b) *full, wool ; woolly, pulley.*

## 14. The 'au' sound ('au') :—

- (a) *fraud, bawd, sawed, broad.*
- (b) *faun, lawn.*
- (c) *haul, shawl, ball ; caul, awl, tall ; maul, crawl, fall.*
- (d) *hauled, bald, walled, crawled ; hauler, trawler, caller.*
- (e) *auk, hawk, walk, baulk.*
- (f) *taut, naught, ought ; taught, nought ; caught, fought.*
- (g) *tauter, slaughter, water.*
- (h) *pause, gauze, laws ; applause, jaws.*
- (i) *sort, court, wart ; forts, quartz.*
- (j) *war, boar, sore, pour, or, door, corps, o'er.*
- (k) *ward, toward, board, sword, gored, poured, flooded.*
- (l) *warn, borne, corn, mourn.*
- (m) *horse, coarse, source.*
- (n) *warble, corbel.*
- (o) *north, fourth.*
- (p) *halt, fault ; salty, faulty ; psalter, defaulter.*

## 15. Long neutral sound ('-er') :—

- (a) *berth, girth, earth, worth.*
- (b) *pearled, whirled, furled, world.*
- (c) *perch, church, birch, search.*
- (d) *her, err, were, cur, purr, stir, myrrh.*
- (e) *germ, firm, worm.*
- (f) *stern, earn, burn, adjourn.*
- (g) *perk, irk, lurk, work.*
- (h) *pert, dirt, hurt, wort.*
- (i) *earl, merle, girl, purl, whorl.*
- (j) *amerce, hearse, purse, worse.*
- (k) *herd, heard, bird, absurd, word.*

- (l) *erst, first, burst, worst.*
- (m) *myrile, kirile, turtle, whortle(berry).*
- (n) *earth, Perth, mirth, worth.*
- (o) *verge, urge, scourge.*
- (p) *ferny, journey, attorney.*
- (q) *erring, purring, stirring.*

## CHAPTER VII

### THE SAME SPELLINGS WITH DIFFERENT SOUNDS

In the last chapter we considered words spelt differently but pronounced the same, as examples of breaches of the phonetic rule, 'One sound, one sign'. In this chapter we are to reverse the process and consider some words spelt the same but differently pronounced, as examples of breaches of the complementary rule, 'One sign, one sound'.

For example, we cannot tell from the spelling whether *wound* is to be pronounced 'wound' (like *hound*) or 'woond' (like *swooned*). It is only from the context that we can know which of these two words is meant: for example, in the sentence, 'The doctor *wound* a bandage round the *wound*', we know that the first *wound* is 'wound' and the second 'woond'.

#### I. WORDS SPELT EXACTLY THE SAME, BUT PRONOUNCED DIFFERENTLY

##### (1) Differences in vowel sounds.

###### (a) *Bow*.

*Bow*, pronounced 'bou' (diphthong); to bend, salaam.

*Bow*, pronounced 'boa' (long 'o'); weapon, necktie.

###### (b) *Row*.

*Row*, pronounced 'rou' (like *how*); noise, quarrel.

*Row*, pronounced 'roa' (long 'o'); a line, or to row a boat.

(c) *Sow*.

*Sow*, pronounced 'sou' (like *now*); female pig.

*Sow*, pronounced 'soa' (long 'o'); to plant seeds.

(Pronounce these words in the following sentences:  
'The *sow* will root up all you *sow* in the garden.' 'He kicked up a *row* because his *row* of books had been disarranged.' 'He straightened his *bow* and made a polite *bow*.')

(d) *Tower*.

*Tower*, pronounced like *hour*; tall structure, castle.

*Tower*, pronounced 'toa-ər'; one who tows, or pulls along.

(e) *Lower*.

*Lower*, pronounced, and sometimes spelt, 'lour'; to look gloomy, or threatening.

*Lower*, pronounced 'loa-ər', comparative of *low*.

(f) *Read*.

*Read*, pronounced 'reed'; present tense.

*Read*, pronounced 'red'; past tense.

(g) *Lead*.

*Lead*, pronounced 'leed'; to guide.

*Lead*, pronounced 'led'; a metal.

(h) *Tear*.

*Tear*, pronounced 'teer'; eye-water, of weeping.

*Tear*, pronounced 'taer'; a rent, to pull apart.

(Pronounce these words in the following sentences:  
'I *read* this book yesterday; I will *read* that one tomorrow.'  
'*Lead* me to the place where you found the *lead*.' 'She shed a *tear* over the *tear* in her new dress.')

(i) *Wound*.

*Wound*, pronounced like *sound*, past tense of 'to wind'.

*Wound*, pronounced like *swooned*; to hurt, injury.

(j) *Wind*.

*Wind*, pronounced like *kind*; to turn.

*Wind*, pronounced like *sinned*; moving air.

(Also pronounced with long 'i' sound in poetry.)

(k) *Hinder*.

*Hinder*, pronounced like *cinder*; to obstruct.

*Hinder*, pronounced like *finder*; behind.

(l) *Lve*.

*Lve*, with short 'i' ('liv'); to exist.

*Lve*, with long 'i' ('leiv'); alert (as in *alive*).

(m) *Worsted*.

*Worsted*, pronounced 'werstəd'; defeated.

*Worsted*, pronounced 'woostəd'; a woollen material.

(n) *Does*.

*Does*, pronounced 'doaz'; plural of *doe*, deer.

*Does*, pronounced 'duz'; 3rd person singular of present tense of 'to do'.

(o) *Tarry*.

*Tarry*, with short 'a' sound; to wait.

*Tarry*, with broad 'a' sound, 'taari'; covered with tar.

(p) *Slaver*.

*Slaver*, pronounced 'slaivər'; a slave ship.

*Slaver*, pronounced 'slavər'; to slobber.

(q) *Raven*.

*Raven*, pronounced 'raiven'; a bird.

*Raven*, pronounced 'ravın'; to plunder, loot.

(r) *Pasty*.

*Pasty*, pronounced 'pastɪ'; a meat pie.

*Pasty*, pronounced 'paɪsti', like paste; e.g. 'pasty-faced', pale-faced.

(s) *Prayer*.

*Prayer*, one syllable ('praer'); request.

*Prayer*, two syllables ('praɪ-ər'); one who prays.

(t) *Wilder*.

*Wilder*, with long 'ɪ' sound; more wild. ('eɪ'.)

*Wilder*, with short 'i' sound; to confuse (bewilder).

(u) *Cant*.

*Cant*, with short 'a' sound; insincere pious talk.

*Cant*, with long 'a' ('kaant'); 'can't', short form of 'cannot'.

(v) *Slough*.

*Slough*, pronounced 'slou'; a bog, morass.

*Slough*, pronounced 'sluf'; to cast skin (as of snakes).

(w) *Buffet*.

*Buffet*, pronounced as spelt; a blow.

*Buffet*, pronounced 'būfai'; refreshment bar (French).

(2) The case of '-ough'.

The classic example of how far English spelling fails to correspond with pronunciation is the variety of sounds assigned to '-ough'. It represents no less than eight distinct sounds in English. In five of them, 'gh' is mute; in two, it has the force of 'f'; and in one, of 'k'. (See Chapter V, (I), p. 96, under the digraph 'gh'.) Here is

the complete list of words in ' -ough ', classified according to their different sounds. (If *lough* is pronounced like the Scotch *loch*, there are nine sounds for ' -ough '.)

- (a) 'ou': *plough*, *bough*, *slough* (bog), *drought*, *doughty* (pronounced 'plou', 'bou', 'slou', 'drou', 'douti').
- (b) 'oo': *through* ('throo').
- (c) 'oa': *though*, *although*, *dough*, *furlough* (*lough*—Irish lake—as pronounced by some) (pronounced 'thoa', 'auldhoa', 'doa', 'ferloa', 'loa').
- (d) 'au': *ought*, *bought*, *brought*, *fought*, *nought*, *sought*, *thought*, *wrought* (pronounced 'aut', 'baut', 'braut', etc.).
- (e) 'of': *cough*, *trough* ('kof', 'trof').
- (f) 'uf': *rough*, *tough*, *enough*, *chough* (bird), *slough* (cast skin) (pronounced 'ruf', 'tuf', 'enuf', 'chuf', 'sluf'). Also *sough* ('suf')—sighing of wind.
- (g) 'ok': *hough* (of a horse; also spelt, and always pronounced, *hock*). Also *lough*—Irish lake—as pronounced by some.
- (h) neutral vowel: *thorough*, *borough* ('thura', 'burə'). Being unaccented in these words, ' -ough ' has the indefinite neutral vowel sound, like 'o' in *hero*, or 'a' in *china*, *soda*.
- (i) 'och': the sound of 'ch' in the Scotch *loch*, or *nicht*; *lough* (Irish lake—as pronounced by most dictionaries; just the same as *loch* in Scotland).

Another word, *hiccough*, is sometimes added to the list, with the same pronunciation as its other spelling, *hiccup*; but this word is a mistaken spelling of *hiccup*, under the erroneous impression that *hiccup* is connected with *cough*. So spelt, it would demand the pronunciation 'hikof'.

Except in two words (*laugh*, *draught*), ' -augh ' is always pronounced ' au ', with ' -gh ' mute, as in *aught*, *naught*, *naughty*, *caught*, *daughter*, etc. (' aut ', ' naut ', ' nauti ', ' kaut ', ' daut r '). But in *laugh* (*laughter*) and *draught* (*draughty*), the ' -gh ' is sounded as ' f ', and the vowel sound is short ' a ', or broad ' a ': ' laf ' or ' laaf '. Contrast the pronunciation of *laughter* with that of *daughter* (' laaftər ', ' dautər ').

Here is a sentence sent me by a correspondent : ' The *dough*-faced *plough*man, leading a horse to be *houghed*, *fought* his way *coughing* and *hiccougging* through the *rough* street of Scarborough.'

And here are some funny verses on the antics of ' -ough '.

' Peasant Arcadian,  
Guiding the *plough*,  
Coarse are your garments,  
Your accent is *rough*.

Peasant inprudent,  
You've got such a *cough* ;  
Are you quite sure you're  
Clad warmly *enough* ?

Peasant imprudent,  
I hear the wind *sough* ;  
Even the birdies sing  
Hoarse on the *bough*.

Your horse, too, I fancy,  
Although he looks *tough*,  
Is limping as if he were  
Sprained in the *hough*.

Home to your cottage  
And bend o'er the *trough*,  
Kneading in loaves  
The digestible *dough*.'



And here is another set of comical verses in illustration of the same spelling absurdities :—

‘ Cried old Doughty, “ I’m through ! life *is* tough !  
 The draught-horse I bought’s strained its hough ;  
 And I’ve got such a cough  
 I feel heavy as dough,  
 And all the fields waiting the plough.  
 Of farming I’ve had quite enough ;  
 It rains, and the land’s like a slough ;  
 Or else there’s a drought,  
 And the crops come to nought,  
 And there’s nowt for the cows in the trough.  
 You smile ? But there’s nought here for laughter ;  
 If you had a wife, son and daughter,  
 And you hadn’t enough  
 To see them all through,  
 You’d say some things you hadn’t oughter.” ’

### (3) Differences in consonantal sounds.

There are a few words, spelt the same, which, while keeping the same vowel sounds, differ in pronunciation in consonantal sounds as nouns and verbs. These are *use*, *abuse*, *excuse*, *house*, *mouse*, *grease*, *mouth*. When the first six of these are nouns, the ‘ s ’ is hard (‘ yeus ’, ‘ abeus ’, ‘ ekskeus ’, ‘ hous ’, ‘ grees ’); and the ‘ th ’ of *mouth* is hard. But when these words are verbs, the final consonant sound is soft ; so : ‘ yeuz ’, ‘ abeuz ’, ‘ ekskeuz ’, ‘ hous ’, ‘ mouz ’, ‘ greez ’, ‘ moudh ’. There is the same difference in pronunciation in the case of *diffuse* as an adjective (‘ difeus ’) and as a verb (‘ difeuz ’).

Pronounce the words in italics in these sentences :—

As you are *close* to the door, please *close* it.  
 Don’t *use* that knife ; I have forbidden the *use* of it.  
 This *house* is not fit to live in ; it is a shame to *house*  
 the poor in this way.

Don't try to *excuse* yourself ; your *excuses* are absurd.  
Don't *abuse* me in that way ; I won't put up with  
your *abuse*.

This writer's style is *diffuse* ; but he does try to  
*diffuse* knowledge.

Don't open your *mouth* so much ; you *mouth* your  
words in speaking.

I want some more *grease* to *grease* the engine.

My cat has caught another *mouse* ; she is a good  
*mouser*.

This change from hard to soft consonantal sounds for distinguishing different parts of speech is in accordance with usage ; but in other words it is indicated by a change in spelling : for example, *advice* and *advise* ; *bath* and *bathe* ; *belief* and *believe* ; *breath* and *breathe* ; *calf* and *calve* ; *cloth* and *clothe* ; *device* and *devise* ; *glass* and *glaze* ; *grass* and *graze* ; *grief* and *grieve* ; *half* and *halve* ; *life* and *live* ; *loss* and *lose* ; *proof* and *prove* ; *relief* and *relieve* ; *safe* and *save* ; *sheath* and *sheathe* ; *shelf* and *shelve* ; *strife* and *strive* ; *thief* and *thieve* ; *teeth* and *teethe* ; *wife* and *wive* ; *wreath* and *wreathe*.

(In some of these examples the vowel sound also changes.)

## II. WORDS THAT SHOULD RIME AS SPELT, BUT DO NOT

So far we have dealt with words that, though spelt exactly the same, are pronounced differently. As well as these, there are a number of words which, as spelt, should rime with other words, but which have a different vowel sound. For example, most words spelt with '-at' have the short 'a' sound, and so rime together (like *cat*, *rat*, *fat*, *mat*, etc.) ; but *what* is pronounced with the short 'o' sound ('hwot'), and so does not rime with *cat*, *rat*, etc. So words that fail to rime with normal words of the same spelling are a further illustration of the breach of the rule, 'One sign, one sound'. Here are some examples to study.

## (I) Long 'a' sound ('ai').

## (a) Words spelt '-aid' (pronounced 'aid').

All these words rime: *maid*, *paid*, *laid*, *raid*,  
*staid*, *braid*, *inlaid*.

But: *said* is pronounced 'sed' (short 'e'), to  
rime with *shed*; and *plaid* is 'plad'.

## (b) Words spelt '-ade' (pronounced 'aid').

All these rime: *fade*, *blade*, *grade*, *glade*, *made*,  
*spade*, *persuade*, *tirade*, *evade*, *trade*, etc.

But: *bade* is pronounced 'bad' (short 'a'), and  
*forbade*. And *charade* is 'shəraad'.

## (c) Words spelt '-are' (pronounced 'aer').

All these rime: *bare*, *blare*, *care*, *dare*, *fare*,  
*glare*, *hare*, *mare*, *declare*, *aware*, *square*, etc.

But: *are* is pronounced 'aar' (broad 'a'), to  
rime with *tar*.

## (d) Words spelt '-ave' (pronounced 'aiv').

All these rime: *brave*, *cave*, *grave*, *knave*, *save*,  
*shave*, *wave*, *slave*, *deprave*, *crave*, etc.

But: *have* is pronounced 'hav' (short 'a').

## (e) Words spelt '-ay'.

All these rime: *bay*, *clay*, *day*, *fray*, *gay*, *lay*,  
*may*, *nay*, *pay*, *ray*, *say*, *slay*, *tray*, *way*, etc.;  
*bays*, *days*, *pays*, *slays*, *ways*, etc.

But: 1. *quay* is pronounced 'kee' (long 'e'  
sound), to rime with *knee*.

2. *says* is pronounced 'sez' (short 'e'),  
to rime with *fez*.

## (f) Words spelt '-ater' ('aiter').

All these rime: *later*, *crater*, *skater*, *slater*, *pater*,  
*mater*.

But: *water* is pronounced 'wautər' ('au'  
sound).

- (g) Words spelt ' -ey '.

All these rime : *grey, obey, fey, bey, dey, prey*.

But : *key* is pronounced ' kee ' (long ' e ').

- (2) Short ' a ' sound.

- (a) Words spelt ' -and '.

All these rime : *and, band, bland, brand, grand, gland, hand, land, expand, sand, stand, strand*.

But : 1. *command, demand, remand* (broad ' a ' sound : ' kumaand '), etc.

2. *wand* (short ' o ' sound : ' wond '),  
*wander*.

- (b) Words spelt ' -ath '.

These rime : *lath, aftermath, bath, path*, ( - ' aath ' usually, but also ' ath ' ).

But : 1. *hath* (short ' a ' sound only).

2. *wrath* (the ' au ' sound : ' rauth ' ).

- (c) Words spelt ' -ather '.

These rime : *gather, lather, blather*.

But : 1. *father, rather* (broad ' a ' sound : ' faa-dhər ', ' raadher ' ).

2. *bather* (long ' a ' sound : ' baidher ' ).

- (d) Words spelt ' -ant '.

All these rime : *ant, bant, rant, pant, cant*, etc.  
(short ' a ' ).

But : 1. *can't* is pronounced ' kaant ' (broad ' a ' ); and so are *chant, enchant, grant, plant*.

2. *want* is pronounced ' wont ' (short ' o ' ).

- (e) Words spelt ' -ass '.

All these rime : *lass, mass, ass, morass*, etc.  
(short ' a ' ).

But : 1. *pass, brass, glass, class, surpass*, ( ' paas ', etc. ; broad ' a ' ).

2. *bass* ( ' bais ' ; long ' a ' ).

- (f) Words spelt with ' wa- '.

In many words the consonant 'w' seems to change short 'a' into the short 'o' sound, or 'au' sound. For instance, such words as *car, bar, star, far, mar, par, tar*, etc., are pronounced regularly with the broad 'a' sound; but *war* is pronounced 'waur' (to rime with *core, more*). Such exceptions may as well be given here together.

1. *war*: all these words are pronounced with the 'au' sound ('waur'): *war, ward, warden, warder, wharf, dwarf, warm, warn, swarm, warp, wart, swart, swarthy, sward, warble, warlock, warring, warred*. (*Warrant, warren, warrior*, have short 'o' sound.)
2. *wan*: pronounced 'won': *wan, wander, want, wanted, wand, wanton, squander, quandary, swan*.
3. *was*: pronounced 'woz': *was, wasn't, wasp*. Also *wash* ('wosh'), *washed*.
4. *wat*: pronounced 'hwot': *what, wat, watch*.
5. *wall*: pronounced 'wol': *wallow, swallow* (to rime with *hollow*). But *wall* itself pronounced 'waul'.
6. *wamp*: pronounced 'womp': *swamp, swampy, wampum*.
7. *wad*: pronounced 'wod': *wad, wadded, waddle, swaddle, swaddling* (clothes), *squadron, squad, quadrangle, quad*.
8. *wab*: pronounced 'wob': *swab* (mop), *squabble*.

Most other words spelt '-ar', '-an', etc., with other consonants than 'w' and 'qu', are pronounced regularly with the 'a' sound:—

1. Broad 'a': *far, hard, garden, larder, scarf, harm, barn, harp, cart, marble*. Short 'a': *arrant, barren*, etc.

2. *fan, can, gander, pant, and, camp, canton,*  
etc.
3. *has, hasn't, asp, ash, smashed, clash,* etc.
4. *hat, catch, snatching, bat, cat,* etc.
5. *hallow, shallow, mallow, tallow,* etc.
6. *lamp, camp, stamped, damp,* etc.
7. *had, added, addled, padding, saddle, mad,* etc.
8. *cab, tabbed, stabbing, babble, scab, gab,* etc.

(3) Long 'e' sound ('ee').

The digraph 'ea' has two sounds—'ee' and short 'e'.

(a) Words spelt '-ead'.

1. Long 'e' sound ('-eed'): these words  
rime: *bead, mead, plead, lead* (guide),  
*read* (pres. tense).

But: 2. Short 'e' sound ('-ed'): these rime:  
*bread, dead, dread, head, stead, instead,*  
*spread, tread, lead* (metal), *read* (past  
tense).

(Note *mead* ('meed'), but *meadow* ('medoa').)

(b) Words spelt '-eak'.

1. Long 'e' sound ('-eek'): these rime:  
*beak, bleak, freak, leak, peak, speak,*  
*teak, weak.*

But: 2. Long 'a' sound ('-aik'): these rime:  
*break, steak.*

But: 3. Short 'e' sound ('-ek'): *breakfast*  
(*brekfæst*).

(c) Words spelt '-ear'.

1. Long 'e' sound ('-eer'): these words  
rime: *blear, (bleared), clear, dear,*  
*drear, ear, fear, gear, hear, near, sear,*  
*spear, appear, tear* (of eye).

But: 2. Long 'a' sound ('-aer'): these rime:  
*bear, pear, tear* (rend).

(Note *beard* ('beerd'), but *heard* ('herd'),  
*hearth*, *heart*, *hearken*—broad 'a' sound  
 ('haarth', etc.).)

(d) Words spelt '-eat'.

1. Long 'e' sound ('-eet'): these rime:  
*beat, bleat, cheat, feat, meat, neat, peat,*  
*pleat, repeat, seat, treat, wheat.*

But: 2. Short 'e' sound: *sweat, threat* ('swet',  
 'thret').

But: 3. Long 'a' sound: *great* ('grait').

(e) Words spelt '-eath'.

1. Long 'e' sound ('-eeth'): these  
 rime: *beneath, heath, bequeath, wreath,*  
*sheath.*

But: 2. Short 'e' sound ('-eth'): *breath,*  
*death* (but *breathe* ('breedh'))).

(f) Words spelt '-eather'.

1. Short 'e' sound ('-edher'): these  
 rime: *heather, feather, leather, weather.*

But: 2. Long 'e' sound ('-eedher'): *breather.*

(g) Words spelt '-eal'.

1. Long 'e' sound ('-eel'): these rime:  
*deal, leal, meal, peal, seal, steal,*  
*squeal, teal, veal, appeal, reveal, etc.*

But: *real* is pronounced 'ree-əl', and *reality,*  
*realism*, are 'ree-aliti', 'ree-əlism'.

(h) Words spelt '-eaf'.

Long 'e' sound: these rime: *leaf, sheaf.*

But: *deaf* is pronounced 'def' (short 'e'  
 sound).

(i) Words spelt '-east'.

Long 'e' sound: these rime: *east, beast,*  
*feast, least, yeast.*

But: *breast* is pronounced 'brest' (short 'e'  
 sound).

(j) Words spelt '-ere'.

Long 'e' sound ('-eer'): these rime:  
*here, mere, sere, sphere, revere, severe,*  
*persevere.*

But: *there, where, ere* are pronounced to rime  
 with *care* ('thaer', 'hwaer', 'aer').

(k) Words spelt '-ieve'.

Long 'e' sound ('-eev'): these rime:  
*believe, grieve, achieve, retrieve, reprieve.*

But: *sieve* is pronounced 'siv' (short 'i'  
 sound), to rime with *give*.

(l) Odd words.

1. (in 'eo'): *people* ('peepl'), *theory*  
 ('theeri').

But: *yeoman* ('yoamən'), *leopard, jeopardy*  
 ('lepərd', 'jepərdi').

2. (in 'ear'): *earth* ('erth'), *dearth*.

But: *hearth* ('haarth').

(4) Long 'i' sound.

(a) Words spelt '-ive'.

1. Long 'i' sound ('eiv'): these words  
 rime: *dive, drive, five, hive, alive,*  
*deprive, derive, revive, contrive, connive,*  
*wive.*

But: 2. Short 'i' ('iv'): *give, live* ('giv',  
 'liv').

Similarly: 1. Long 'i': *driver, fiver, reviver, survivor.*

But: 2. Short 'i': *giver, liver, river.*

(b) Words spelt '-ice'.

1. Long 'i' sound ('ei'): these rime:  
*dice, ice, lice, mice, nice, price, rice,*  
*slice, spice, entice, vice.*

But: 2. Long 'e' sound: *police, caprice* ('-ees').



## (c) Words spelt ' -ile '.

1. Long 'i' sound ('eil'): these rime:  
*bile, file, mile, rile, pile, smile, stile,*  
*while, defile, revile.*

But: 2. Long 'e' sound ('-eel'): *facile, imbecile.*

## (d) Words spelt ' -ine '.

1. Long 'i' sound ('ein'): these rime:  
*line, vine, wine, whine, mine, nine,*  
*pine, shine, recline, incline, repine,*  
*combine.*

But: 2. Long 'e' sound ('-een'): *machine,*  
*ravine, marine, iodine, strychnine,*  
*glycerine.*

## (e) Words spelt ' -ind '.

1. Long 'i' sound ('-eind'): these rime:  
*bind, blind, find, mind, rind,*  
*grind, kind.*

But: 2. Short 'i': *wind* ('wind'), except in verse, where it is often made to rime with words like *mind*.

(Note *window, tinder, cinder, spindle*, with short 'i'; but *binder, finder, grinder, minder*, with long 'i'.)

## (f) Words spelt with ' -ild '.

1. Long 'i' sound ('-eild'): these rime:  
*child, mild, wild.*

But: 2. Short 'i' ('-ild'): *gild, guild, build.*

## (g) Words spelt ' -eight '.

1. Long 'i' sound ('-eit'): these rime:  
*height, sleight.*

But: 2. Long 'a' ('-ait'): *weight, freight.*  
 (Compare *weigh, sleigh, neigh*.)

(Note 'igh', 'ight' always have long 'i' sound: *high, light*, etc.)

(5) Long 'o' sound.

(a) Words spelt '-ome'.

1. Long 'o' sound ('-oam'): these all  
rime: *dome, home, nome, tome, gnome.*

But: 2. Short 'u' sound ('-um'): *come,*  
*some* ('kum', 'sum').

(b) Words spelt '-one'.

1. Long 'o' sound ('-oan'): these rime:  
*bone, cone, crone, lone, stone, tone,*  
*atone, alone, throne, prone, etc.*

But: 2. Short 'o' sound ('-on'): *gone, shone*  
(*'gon', 'shon'*).

But: 3. Short 'u' sound ('-un'): *done, one*  
(*'dun', 'wun'*).

(Note *fonder, ponder* (short 'o'); but *wonder*  
(*'wunder'*). Note *once* ('wuns', short 'u').)

(c) Words spelt '-o'.

1. Long 'o' sound ('-oa'): these rime:  
*go, no, so, lo!*

But: 2. The 'oo' sound ('-oo'): *do, to, two,*  
*who* ('doo', 'too', 'hoo').

(d) Words spelt '-omb'.

1. Long 'o' sound ('-oam'): *comb,*  
*clomb.*

But: 2. Long 'oo' sound ('-oom'): *tomb,*  
*womb* ('toom', 'woom').

But: 3. Short 'o' sound ('-om'): *bomb*  
(*'bom'*).

(e) Words spelt '-ow'.

1. Long 'o' sound ('-oa'): these rime:  
*blow, crow, grow, low, mow* (cut grass),  
*stow, snow, slow, tow, flow, bow*  
(weapon), *row* (line), *sow* (seed).

But: 2. Diphthong 'ou' sound: *cow, how, now,*  
*vow, bow* (salaam), *bows* (of boat),  
*sow* (pig), *row* (noise).

## (f) Words spelt ' -own '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oan ' ) : these rime :  
*blown, grown, mown, own, sown, flown.*

But : 2. Diphthong ' ou ' sound : *clown, crown,*  
*down, drown, frown, town.*

## (g) Words spelt ' -ost '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oast ' ) : these rime :  
*host, ghost, most, post.*

But : 2. Short ' o ' : *cost, accost, frost, lost.*

But : 3. Short ' u ' : *dost* (2nd pers. sing. pres. tense of ' do ').

## (h) Words spelt ' -ose '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oaz ' ) : these rime :  
*chose, hose, nose, rose, pose, close* (verb).

But : 2. The ' oo ' sound : *lose, whose* ( ' looz ' ,  
 ' hooz ' ).

## (i) Words spelt ' -oll '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oal ' ) : these rime :  
*roll, poll* (head), *toll.*

But : 2. Short ' o ' sound : *doll, loll, poll* (parrot).

## (j) Words spelt ' -oad '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oad ' ) : these rime :  
*goad, load, road, toad, woad.*

But : 2. The ' au ' sound : *broad* ( ' braud ' ).

## (k) Words spelt ' -ove '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oav ' ) : these rime :  
*cove, clove, grove, hove, wove, rove,*  
*strove, trove.*

But : 2. Short ' u ' sound ( ' -uv ' ) : *love* ( ' luv ' ),  
*dove, glove, above, shove.*

But : 3. Long ' oo ' sound ( ' -oov ' ) : *move,*  
*prove, improve* ( ' moov ' , etc.).

(l) Words spelt ' -over '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oavər ' ): these  
rime : *clover, rover, over, drover*.

But : 2. Short ' u ' sound ( ' -uvər ' ): *cover,*  
*glover, lover, shover, plover*.

But : 3. Long ' oo ' sound ( ' -oovər ' ): *mover,*  
*improver*.

(Note also *overt* ( ' oavərt ' ), but *covert* ( ' kuvərt ' );  
*woven* ( ' woavən ' ), but *oven* ( ' uvən ' ).)

(m) Words spelt ' -oe '.

1. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oa ' ): these rime :  
*doe, floe, hoe, roe*.

But : 2. Long ' oo ' sound : *shoe* ( ' shoo ' ).

(6). Short ' o ' sound.

(a) Words spelt ' -on '.

1. Short ' o ' sound : these all rime : *on,*  
*pon, con, don*.

But : 2. Short ' u ' sound ( ' -un ' ): *son, ton,*  
*won* ( ' sun ' , ' tun ' , ' wun ' ).

(Note *donkey* (short ' o ' ), but *monkey* ( ' mun-  
ki ' ), *monk* ( ' munk ' ); *ponder, fonder* (short  
' o ' ), but *wonder* ( ' wundər ' ).)

(b) Words spelt ' -oss '.

1. Short ' o ' sound : these rime : *boss,*  
*cross, doss, floss, loss, moss, toss*.

But : 2. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oas ' ): *gross*.

(c) Words spelt ' -ong '.

1. Short ' o ' sound ( ' -ong ' ): these rime :  
*gong, long, belong, prong, song, wrong*.

But : 2. Short ' u ' sound ( ' -ung ' ): *tongue,*  
*among* ( ' tung ' , ' amung ' ).

## (d) Words spelt ' -oth '.

1. Short ' o ' sound : these rime : *moth*,  
*broth*, *froth*, *cloth*.

But . 2. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oath ' ) : *both*, *loth*,  
*sloth*.

## (e) Words spelt ' -other '.

1. Short ' o ' sound : these rime : *bother*,  
*pother*.

But : 2. Short ' u ' sound ( ' -udhər ' ) : *other*,  
*another*, *brother*, *mother*.

## (7). Long ' u ' sound.

## (a) Words spelt ' -ure '.

1. Long ' u ' sound ( ' -eur ' ) : these rime :  
*cure*, *pure*, *lure*, *secure*, *endure*, *immure*,  
*inure*, *allure*.

But : 2. The ' oo ' sound ( ' -oor ' ) *sure*  
( ' shoor ' ), *insure*, *assure*.

(Note ' s ' in *sure* is ' sh '.)

## (b) Words spelt ' -ew '.

1. Long ' u ' sound ( ' -eu ' ) : these rime :  
*few*, *dew*, *hew*, *mew*, *new*, *pew*, *stew*.

But : 2. Long ' oo ' sound ( ' oo ' ) these rime .  
*blew*, *chew*, *grew*, *flew*, *screw*, *crew*  
( ' bloo ' , etc.)

3. Long ' o ' sound ( ' -oa ' ) : *sew*, *shew*  
( ' soa ' , ' shoa ' ).

## (c) Words spelt ' -ue '.

1. Long ' u ' sound ( ' -eu ' ) : these rime :  
*due*, *cue*, *hue*, *endue*, *rue*, *pursue*.

But : 2. Long ' oo ' sound : *blue*, *true* ( ' bloo ' ,  
' troo ' ), *glue*, *clue*.

## (d) Words spelt ' -ury ' , ' -urial '.

1. Long ' u ' sound ( ' -euri ' ) : these  
rime : *fury*, *jury* ; and these : *mer-*  
*curial*, *Escurial*.

But : 2. Short 'e' sound : *bury* ('berri')  
*burial* ('berriəl')

(8). Short 'u' sound.

(a) Words spelt '-ut'.

1. Short 'u' sound : these rime : *but, cut,*  
*nut, rut, shut, smut, slut.*

But : 2. The short 'oo' sound : *put* ('pūt').

(b) Words spelt '-ush'.

1. Short 'u' sound : these rime : *blush,*  
*crush, flush, gush, lush, mush, plush,*  
*rush, slush, brush, thrush.*

But : 2. The short 'oo' sound : *bush, push*  
( 'būsh', 'pūsh' ).

(Note *cushion* ('kūshn').)

(9). The 'au' sound.

(a) Words spelt '-all'.

1. The 'au' sound ('-aul') : these rime :  
*all, fall, ball, call, tall, wall, hall.*

But : 2. Short 'a' sound . *shall* ('shal').

(b) Words spelt '-ork'.

1. The 'au' sound ('-aurk') : these  
rime : *cork, fork, pork, stork.*

But . 2. The long neutral sound ('-erk') :  
*work* ('werk').

(c) Words spelt '-ord'.

1. The 'au' sound ('-aurd') : these  
rime : *cord, chord, ford, lord, sword.*

But : 2. Long neutral : *word* ('werd').

(d) Words spelt '-orth'.

1. The 'au' sound ('-aurth') : these  
rime : *forth, north.*

But : 2. Long neutral sound : *worth* ('werth').

## (e) Words spelt ' -orse '.

1. The 'au' sound ('-aurs'): these  
rime: *gorse, horse, morse*.

But: 2. Long neutral sound: *worse* ('wers').

## (f) Words spelt ' -orm '.

1. The 'au' sound ('-aurm'): these  
rime: *form, norm, storm, uniform*.

But: 2. Long neutral sound: *worm* ('worm').  
(So *world, worship* ('werld', 'wership').)

(Note under short 'o' sound: *sorry, lorry*; but  
*worry* ('wuri'—short 'u' sound).)

## (10) The diphthong 'ou' sound.

## (a) Words spelt ' -our '.

1. The 'ou' sound: these rime: *sou, lour, scour, hour, our, flour, devour*.

But: 2. With 'au' sound ('-aur') *four, pour*  
(Compare *court, courtier, courtesan*.)

## (b) Words spelt ' -ouch '.

1. The 'ou' sound ('-ouch'): these  
rime: *couch, pouch, slouch, crouch, vouch*.

But: 2. Short 'u': *touch* ('tuch').

## (c) Words spelt ' -outh '.

1. The 'ou' sound: these rime: *south, mouth, drouth*.

But: 2. Long 'u' sound: *youth* ('yeuth').

(Note *south* makes *southern, southerly* (short 'u'—  
'sudhern', 'sudherly').)

## (d) Words spelt ' -ound '.

1. The 'ou' sound: these rime: *mound, sound, round, found, bound, ground, pound, wound* (past tense of 'wind').

But : 2. The long 'oo' sound : *wound* (hurt—  
'woond').

(e) Words spelt '-oud'.

1. The 'ou' sound : these rime : *loud*,  
*cloud*, *aloud*, *proud*.

But : 2. Short 'oo' sound : *would* ('wūd'),  
*could*, *should*.

(f) Words spelt '-out'.

1. The 'ou' sound : *shout*, *about*, *route*,  
*gout*, *tout*.

But : 2. The long 'oo' sound : *route* ('root').

(g) Words spelt '-oul'.

1. The 'ou' sound : *foul*.

2. The long 'oo' sound : *ghoul* ('gool').

3. The long 'o' sound : *soul* ('soal').

(Compare *mould* ('moald'), *moulder*; *shoulder*  
( ' shoalder ' ); *moult* ('moalt').)





## CHAPTER VIII

### SOME SPELLING RULES

ENGLISH spelling is so full of irregularities that it is not easy to find satisfactory rules for guidance. Even such as there are have to be more or less qualified by exceptions. But these few may be found helpful.

#### I. FINAL MUTE 'E'

##### (I) Uses of final mute 'e'.

- (a) Rule. Mute 'e' at the end of a monosyllable or a stressed syllable is a sign that the preceding vowel is long.

Examples : *fate, gamesome, baneful, mete, precede, scene, knife, unwise, wisely, rose, elope, lonely, tune, allure, assume.*

Exceptions : In these words the vowel is short : *give, live (but alive), shone, gone, love, dove, above, shove, have, come, some, done.* (These would be, spelt according to their pronunciation : 'giv', 'liv', 'shon', 'gon', 'luv', 'duv', 'abuv', 'shuv', 'hav', 'kum', 'sum', 'dun'.)

(Note.—This rule does not apply to unstressed syllables ; e.g. in *doctrine, surface, privilege, message, definite*, etc., the preceding vowel is neutral or short.)

- (b) Rule. Mute 'e' after 'c', 'g', 'th', 'ch', and often 's', is a sign that these consonants are soft.

Examples : *farce, force, fierce, surplice, surface, urge, emerge, enlarge, forge, breathe, writhe, loathe, soothe, moustache, douche, praise, ease, rouse, lose, bruise*, etc.

(But : in *terse, curse, hearse, worse*, etc., the 's' is hard.)

## (2) Rules for adding suffixes to words ending in mute 'e'.

- (a) Rule. If the suffix begins with a consonant, mute 'e' is retained; if the suffix begins with a vowel, mute 'e' is dropped. (Or, when a suffix is added to a word ending in mute 'e', the mute 'e' is dropped before a vowel, but not before a consonant.)

Examples: *hope, hopeful, hopeless*, but *hoping*; *tune, tuneless, tuneful*, but *tuning*; *tame, tamely, tameless*, but *taming*; *excite, excitement*, but *exciting*; *love, lovely*, but *loving*; *pale, paleness*, but *palish*; *move, movement*, but *movable*; *grace, graceful*, but *gracious*; *like, likeness*, but *liking*; *leave* but *leaving*; *construe*, but *construing*; *cure*, but *curable*; *license*, but *licensing*.

- (b) Chief exception: The mute 'e' is retained even before a vowel if it is needed to preserve or emphasize the soft sound of preceding 'c' or 'g'.

(Remember that 'c' and 'g' are usually soft before 'i' and 'e', but hard before 'a', 'o', 'u', 'ou', 'au', etc. See Chapter V, under 'c' and 'g', pp. 83, 87.)

Examples: *notice, noticeable*; *trace, traceable*; *peace, peaceable*; *service, serviceable*; *change, changeable*; *gauge, gaugeable*; *courage, courageous*; *singe, singeing*; *swinge, swingeing*.

But: the mute 'e' is dropped in such words as *plunging, lunging, changing, avenging, ranging*. Because the 'g' is naturally soft before 'i'. *Singeing* and *swingeing* retain the mute 'e' to avoid confusion with *singing* and *swinging*, in which the 'g' is hard (*sing, swing*). In *sing, singing; long, longing; bang, banging*, etc., the 'g' is originally hard, and so there is no soft 'g' to preserve.

- (c) Some special exceptions:

- (a) Words ending in '-dge', '-ue', '-we', drop the final 'e' before a consonant: e.g. *judge*,

*judgment; due, duly; true, truly; awe, awful.* (Note, *whole* makes *wholly*.)

- (b) The words *blue, glue*, keep the mute 'e' even before the vowel 'y': *bluey, gluey*, to avoid their being pronounced like *buy, guy*.
- (c) Monosyllables in '-ie' change '-ie' into 'y' before the suffix '-ing': e.g. *die, dying; tie, tying; lie, lying; vie, vying* (or *vieing*). But 'hie' keeps the mute 'e' and makes *hieing*.

## II. DOUBLE CONSONANTS (LIKE 'MM', 'PP', 'LL', 'RR', 'SS')

- (1) As a rule, the vowels before double consonants are short.

Examples: *unhappy, narrow, shallow, better, lesser, merry, mellow, sinner, finny, hilly, simmer, mission, jiffy, bonny, fodder, folly, sorrow, upper, sully, hurry, lubber.*

Exceptions: Some words with double 'l' ('ll') have long vowels.

- (a) With '-all': *all, ball, fall, fallen, gall, hall, pall, appalling, small, stall, tall, tallest, wall, walled* (the 'au' sound).
  - (b) With '-oll': *droll, roll, roller, poll, polled, stroll, stroller, tok, tolling, wholly* (long 'o' sound).
  - (c) With '-ull': *bull, bully, full, fully, pull, pulling, pulley* (the short 'oo' sound).
  - (d) With '-ooll': *woollen, woolly* (the short 'oo' sound).
- (2) Doubling of consonants before certain suffixes.

- (1) When words ending in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel (so excluding digraphs like 'ee', 'ea', 'ai', etc.) have added to them a

suffix beginning with a vowel (like ' -ed ', ' -er ', ' -able ', ' -y '), they—

- (a) double the final consonant if they are either a monosyllable or are accented on the last syllable ;
- (b) keep it single if the last syllable is unaccented ;
- but (c) final ' -l ' is always doubled,
- and (d) with final ' s ' usage varies.

Examples :

Verbs :

- (a) *pot, potted ; regret, regretted ; tar, tarring ; demur, demurring ; forbid, forbidden.*
- (b) *limit, limited ; simper, simpering.*
- (c) *travel, travelled ; level, levelling ; quarrel, quarrelling ; rebel, rebelled.*
- (d) *bias, biassed (or biased) ; focus, focussing (or focusing).*

(Note, exceptions to (b) : *worship, worshipping ; rivet, rivetted.*)

Adjectives :

- (a) *thin, thinnest ; mad, madder ; fad, faddy.*
- (b) *common, commonest ; stupid, stupider.*
- (c) *cruel, cruellest.*

Nouns :

- (a) *gas, gassy ; japan, japanned.*
- (b) *syrup, syrupy.*
- (c) *gruel, gruelling.*

- (2) Rule. In forming adverbs in ' -ly ' from adjectives in ' -l ' or double ' -l ', double ' -l ' is always right.

Examples : *full, fully ; purposeful, purposefully ; special, specially ; dull, dully.* (No distinction is made between *fully* and *dully*, though the two ' l 's are sounded in *fully* as one letter ( ' fūli ' ), and in *dully* as two—' dul-li '.)

- (3) Rule. Monosyllables in ‘-ll’ drop the final ‘-l’ before suffixes beginning with a consonant.

Examples: *well, welcome, well, welfare; all, altogether; full, fully* (‘fūli’).

Exception: But the final ‘-l’ is not dropped before ‘-ness’: e.g. *ill, illness; still, stillness; dull, dullness* (and *dulness*).

- (4) Rule. Monosyllables in ‘-ll’ usually drop final ‘-l’ when used as suffixes: e.g. *roll, en-rol; fill, ful-fil*.

(But some retain the final ‘-l’: e.g. *fall, befall, downfall; call, miscall; well, unwell, farewell*.)

- (5) Rule. In forming nouns in ‘-ness’ from adjectives ending in ‘-n’, both ‘n’s’ are retained.

Examples: *common, commonness; rotten, rottenness; sudden, suddenness*, etc.

(*solemn*, in spite of its mute ‘n’, usually forms *solemnness*, but it may also be spelt *solemnness*.)

### III. DOUBLE CONSONANTS, OR SINGLE ?

Here we come upon one of the most puzzling problems in English spelling. Of the many thousands of English words whose spelling cannot be inferred from their pronunciation, most are those involving the use of single or double consonants. It is in such words that most spelling mistakes are made. For example, why should *harass* be spelt with one ‘r’ and *embarrass* with two? Why should *committee* have two ‘m’s’ and *comity* have only one? Why should *levelled* have a double ‘l’, while *unparalleled* has but one in its final syllable? And why should not *tyranny* be spelt ‘tyrrany’, which would represent the sound of the word much better? A little knowledge of Latin will explain why e.g. *innocent* is spelt with a double ‘n’; for the word is compounded of ‘*in*’, the Latin prefix for ‘not’, and ‘*nocent*’, harmful; but most people have to be guided

by the sound of words, and in English spelling mere sound is too often but a blind guide.

Unhappily there are no rules to guide us here, and the words in which spelling mistakes of this kind may be made are too many to give in correct spelling lists. All that can be done is to note the proper spellings as we come across the words, and learn them by heart.

A few examples will show how complicated the question is. Must we spell, for example, 'harras', or 'harrass', or *harass*? Or 'embarras', or 'embarass', or *embarrass*? Or 'dissapoint', or 'disapoint', or *disappoint*? Or 'abreviate', or *abbreviate*? Or 'canonnical', or 'canonical', or *canonical*? Or 'dessicated', or *desiccated*? Or 'tyrrany', or 'tyrranny', or *tyranny*? Or 'skillfull', or 'skillful', or *skilful*? Or 'acommodate', or 'accomodate', or *accommodate*? Or 'batallion', or 'battallion', or *battalion*? Or 'billious', or *bilious*? Or 'cammelia', or 'camelia', or *camellia*? Or (worst of all!) 'unparralleled', or 'unparalleled', or *unparalleled*? (In each case, the accepted spelling is given last, in italics.)

All that can be done here is to give a list of a few of the more puzzling words of this kind:—

<i>harass</i>	<i>barrister</i>	<i>chicory</i>	<i>balance</i>
<i>embarrass</i>	<i>battalion</i>	<i>desiccated</i>	<i>balloon</i>
<i>disappoint</i>	<i>bilious</i>	<i>moccasin</i>	<i>barometer</i>
<i>disappear</i>	<i>bulrush</i>	<i>exaggerate</i>	<i>barricade</i>
<i>unparalleled</i>	<i>bunion</i>	<i>woollen</i>	<i>benefited</i>
<i>accommodate</i>	<i>camellia</i>	<i>woolly</i>	<i>vigorous</i>
<i>Britain</i>	<i>canon (official)</i>	<i>wholly</i>	<i>vinegar</i>
<i>Brittany</i>	<i>canonical</i>	<i>saddler</i>	<i>traveller</i>
<i>Britannia</i>	<i>cannon (gun)</i>	<i>skilful</i>	<i>levelled</i>
<i>committee</i>	<i>tyranny</i>	<i>aggravate</i>	<i>personnel</i>
<i>comity</i>	<i>till ; until</i>	<i>allege</i>	<i>calligraphy</i>
<i>abbreviate</i>	<i>unanimous</i>	<i>allegiance</i>	<i>canister</i>
<i>all right</i>	<i>underrate</i>	<i>analogous</i>	<i>cannibal</i>
<i>banister</i>	<i>veteran</i>	<i>assassin</i>	<i>caricature</i>

<i>colonnade</i>	<i>labyrinth</i>	<i>oculist</i>	<i>attic</i>
<i>corroberate</i>	<i>mattress</i>	<i>oracle</i>	<i>scissors</i>
<i>develop</i>	<i>missile</i>	<i>origin</i>	<i>separate</i>
<i>envelope</i>	<i>myrrh</i>	<i>parasite</i>	<i>symmetrical</i>
<i>dilapidated</i>	<i>supereroga-</i>	<i>parricide</i>	<i>synonymous</i>
<i>dilatory</i>	<i>tion</i>	<i>privilege</i>	<i>tariff</i>
<i>dilemma</i>	<i>stalactite</i>	<i>pulley</i>	<i>pittance</i>
<i>effervesce</i>	<i>soluble</i>	<i>quarrel</i>	<i>immediate</i>
<i>ennoble</i>	<i>sedentary</i>	<i>quarantine</i>	<i>haemorrhage</i>
<i>exhilarate</i>	<i>revenue</i>	<i>ravenous</i>	<i>enable</i>
<i>illiterate</i>	<i>occur</i>	<i>resurrection</i>	<i>dissuade</i>
<i>interrupt</i>	<i>occurrence</i>	<i>rheumatic</i>	

## IV. TWO CONSONANTS WITH ONE SOUND

There is a certain amount of irregularity in the use and pronunciation of such consonantal digraphs as 'ck', 'cq', 'sc', and 'sch'.

## (I) 'ck'.

- (a) No words begin with 'ck' (i.e. it is never initial).
- (b) Most monosyllables ending with the 'k' sound take 'ck', like *back*, *fleck*, *trick*, *block*, *tuck*.  
(But : many words of two syllables or more end with 'c': e.g. *attic*, *static*, *academic*, *stoic*, *bivouac*, *picnic*, *traffic*, *tonic*, *topic*, *rheumatic*, *chronic*, *schismatic*, *emphatic*, *physic*; and one monosyllable, *tic*.)
- (c) In *acknowledge*, the 'a' is the preposition 'to' which occurs in such words as *aboard*, *ashore*, and the 'c' gives the 'k' sound, because 'k' in *knowledge* is mute.
- (d) The words *picnic*, *bivouac*, make *picnicking*, *bivouacking*.

## (2) 'cq'.

In *acquaint, acquire, acquit, acquiesce*. (Here the 'c' represents the 'd' of the Latin prefix 'ad'—'to'.)  
(But *aquarium, aquatic, aqueduct, aqueous, aquiline*.)

## (3) 'sc'.

(a) 's' before 'e' and 'i': e.g. *scene, scent, sceptre, iridescent, descend, ascend, nascent, crescent, science, scission, sciatica, scimitar, scintillate, sciolist, scissors*.

(But: *sceptic* ('skeptik').)

(b) 'sk' before 'o', 'a', 'u' and a consonant: e.g. *scamp, scatter, scold, scope, scuffle, scupper, scout, rescue, scream, scribe*, etc. (See Chapter V, under Letter 'c', p. 85.)

## (4) 'sch'.

(a) 'sk': e.g. *scheme, scholar, school, schooner*.

(b) 'sh': e.g. *schist* ('shist'), *schedule* ('shedeul', also pronounced 'skedeul').

(c) 's': e.g. *schism*, ('sizm').

## (5) 'cc' (see Chapter V, p. 84).

(a) 'k' before 'a', 'o', 'u' and a consonant: e.g. *occasion, accompany, accuse, accost, account, acclaim, accredit* ('akredit'), etc.

(b) 'x' or 'ks' before 'e' and 'i': e.g. *success, accept, accident, succinct* ('sukses'), etc.

## V. RULES ABOUT TERMINATIONS AND SUFFIXES

## (1) Verbs ending in '-ede' and '-eed'.

There is no special reason why such verbs should be differently spelt, and it is a pity that they cannot be spelt alike (either with '-eed' or '-ede').



(a) With 'ede': *cede, accede, antecede, concede, intercede, precede, recede, retrocede, secede, supersede.*

(b) With 'eed': *exceed, proceed, succeed.*

(Avoid confusing *preceding*, 'going before', with *proceeding*, 'going forward'.)

(2) Which? 'ie' or 'ei'?

Weak spellers are often puzzled whether words like *believe* and *receive* should be spelt with 'ie' or 'ei', when the sound is 'ee'. A simple and useful rule is the rime, "i" before "e", except after "c": i.e. spell 'ie' unless a 'c' precedes, and then spell 'ei'. The exception *seize* should be noted.

(a) Words spelt with '-ie': *believe, grief, brief, relieve, retrieve, etc.*

(b) Words spelt with '-ei' (complete list): *conceive, conceit, deceive, perceive, receive, receipt, ceiling.*  
Also: exceptions to above rule: *seize, plebeian, weird, counterfeit.*

(3) Words ending in '-ee', '-oe', '-ye'.

Rule. Such words remain unchanged before suffixes beginning with a vowel.

Examples: *agree, agreeable, agreeing; referee, refereeing; foresee, foreseeing; flee, fleeing; hoe, hoeing; shoe, shoeing; toe, toeing; eye, eyeing.*

(But: *free, freer.*)

(4) Words ending in '-y'.

Rules:

(a) Words ending in '-y' preceded by a consonant, change the '-y' into '-i' before all suffixes except '-ous'.

Examples: *dry, dri-ed; deny, deni-al; lady, ladi-es; merry, merri-er, merri-ly, merri-ment; busy, busi-ness,*

*busi-est, busi-ly ; jolly, jolli-er, jolli-est, jolli-ty ; beauty, beauti-ful, beauti-fy ; duty, duti-ful.*

(But : *beaute-ous, dute-ous.*)

Exceptions : Some monosyllables in ‘-y’ preceded by a vowel have two forms before suffixes : e.g. *dry, dry-ly* and *dri-ly, dry-er* and *dri-er*.

(b) Words ending with ‘-y’ preceded by a vowel, before suffixes.

(i) In some the ‘-y’ remains unchanged.

Examples : *boy, boys, boyish, boyhood ; valley, valleys ; joy, joyous ; enjoy, enjoyable ; grey, greyish ; pray, prayer, praying ; monkey, monkeys, monkeyish ; key, keys ; buy, buyer, buying ; betray, betrayal ; pay, payable.*

(ii) Some words change the ‘-y’ into ‘-i’ before a suffix beginning with a vowel.

Examples : *gay, gai-ety ; pay, pai-(e)d ; say, sai-(e)d.*

(5) Words ending in ‘-al’, ‘-el’, ‘-le’.

The spelling of such words is liable to be confusing, as the final syllables, however spelt, are pronounced the same.

(a) In ‘-el’ : e.g. *chapel, lintel, tassel, chisel, angel, lapel, chattel, mussel, camel, panel, channel, flannel, barrel, quarrel, runnel, sorrel, model*, etc.

(b) In ‘-al’ : e.g. *bridal, pedal, medal, metal, rascal, material, moral, choral, coral, modal*, etc.

(c) In ‘-le’ : e.g. *bridle, peddle, meddle, mettle, angle, cattle, battle, rattle, fettle, settle, muscle, rustle, wrestle, castle, bustle, idle, able, wrangle, mingle, single, tingle, coddle*, etc.

(6) Words in ‘-ce’ and in ‘-se’.

The rule is that ‘-ce’ is used in nouns, ‘-se’ in verbs.

(a) ‘-ce’ : e.g. *advice, device, licence, practice* (nouns).

(b) ‘-se’ : e.g. *advise, devise, license, practise* (verbs).

## (7) Verbs in ' -ise ' and ' -ize '.

Whether certain verbs should be spelt with ' -ise ' or ' -ize ' is a disputed question, on which even authorities differ. The termination ' -ize ' is really Greek ( ' -izo ' ), and strictly all verbs derived from the Greek should in English be spelt with ' -ize '. But there are many verbs which do not derive from that source, and which should for various reasons be spelt with ' -ise '. Such are *advertise*, *apprise*, *chastise*, *circumcise*, *comprise*, *compromise*, *demise*, *despise*, *devise*, *disfranchise*, *disguise*, *enfranchise*, *enterprise*, *excise*, *exercise*, *improvise*, *incise*, *premise*, *supervise*, *surmise*, *surprise*.

Words like *sympathize*, *symbolize*, *harmonize*, *synchronize*, *synthesise*, *systematize*, etc., from the Greek, are generally spelt with ' -ize '. But it is confusing to have these two signs for the same sound, and the tendency now is towards spelling all these verbs alike with ' -ise '. So the best way out of the difficulty is to use ' -ise ' in all cases (though ' -ize ' has the advantage of having a more correct sign ( ' z ' ) for the soft ' s ' sound).

## (8) Words in ' -ory ' and ' -ary '.

The suffix ' -ory ' is generally added to stems in ' -s ' and ' -t ' : e.g. *kurs-ory*, *audit-ory*, *consolat-ory*, *hist-ory*.

Exceptions :

- (a) When ' n ' precedes the final ' t ' of the stem, ' -ary ' is added : e.g. *comment-ary*, *compliment-ary*, *element-ary*.
- (b) In the following words, ' -ary ' is added : *advers-ary*, *caravansary*, *commissary*, *dispensary*, *glossary*, *hereditary*, *military*, *monetary*, *necessary*, *notary*, *proprietary*, *salutary*, *sanitary*, *secretary*, *solitary*, *tributary*, *voluntary*, *votary*.
- (9) The suffixes ' -er ', ' -or ', of the agent.
  - (a) ' -er ' : This is the English suffix, and it can be added to any existing English verb ; but with

many verbs the regular agent nouns end in ' -or ', and then that in ' -er ' is an occasional one only, and with others both forms are used.

Examples : *paint, painter ; toil, toiler ; send, sender ; believer, player, worker, adventurer, biographer, writer, etc.*

(b) ' -or ' : This is the Latin suffix, and is used with words derived from the Latin.

Examples : *actor, assessor, auditor, censor, professor, speculator.*

Note also *bachelor, councillor, creditor, donor, emperor, governor, oppressor, orator, sculptor, surveyor, survivor, tailor, warrior.*

(c) Some words take both suffixes : e.g. *assertor, asserter ; exhibitor, exhibiter ; grantor, granter ; vendor, vender ; warrantor, warranter ; detractor, detracter ; acceptor, accepter.*

#### (10) Words in ' -our '.

The present tendency is to spell more and more words with ' -or ' that have been spelt with ' -our '. For example, not long ago *governor* was spelt ' *governour* '. But there still remain a good many words spelt with ' -our '.

Examples : *labour, ardour, colour, honour, favour, saviour, armour, succour, endeavour, humour.*

(Such words form *labourite, colourist, humourist, honourable, favourable.*)

*clamour, clangour, rigour, odour, vigour, valour, vapour.*

(Such words form *clamorous, rigorous, vigorous, odorous, valorous, vaporous.*)

#### (11) Words in ' -able ' and ' -ible '.

It is not easy to remember which of these two terminations is correct in certain adjectives. Most are formed with ' -able ' ; so a list is given of those that take ' -ible '.

*accessible, admissible, audible, combustible, compatible, comprehensible, contemptible, credible, defensible, discernible, divisible, eligible, fallible, feasible, flexible, forcible, horrible,*

*incorrigible, incredible, indelible, indwisible, intelligible, invincible, irresistible, illegible, negligible, ostensible, permissible, plausible, possible, preventible, responsible, sensible, susceptible, visible.*

(12) Words in ' -ent ' and ' -ant '.

These two terminations are confusing ; and there is no rule to guide us as to which to use. These lists are not exhaustive, but they may prove helpful.

(a) Words in ' -ent ' : *absent, abhorrent, adherent, apparent, benevolent, element, coherent, competent, component, confident (adj.), consequent, continent, convenient, correspondent, current, dependent (adj.), descendant (adj.), despondent, eminent, evident, excellent, expedient, impotent, incident, incipient, incumbent, ingredient, innocent, iridescent, latent, obedient, opponent, orient, parent, patient, permanent, penitent, potent, precedent, president, prevalent, provident, recurrent, redolent, resident, reverent, salient, sentient, solvent, sufficient, superintendent, supplement, tenement, transient, transcendent.*

(Negatives take the same : e.g. *incompetent, disobedient, etc.*)

(b) Words in ' -ant ' : *abundant, arrogant, ascendant, aspirant, assistant, complaisant, compliant, confidant (noun), defendant, dependant (noun), descendant (noun), disputant, dominant, emigrant, extravagant, extant, litigant, nonchalant, peasant, pheasant, pleasant, pedant, petulant, protestant, puissant, relevant, resonant, tenant, vagrant.*

Note.—The nouns follow suit : e.g. *absence, incoherence ; abundance, arrogance.*

(13) Words in ' -re '.

A few words are still spelt with ' -re ' at the end instead of ' -er '. They are pronounced just the same.

*accoutre, calibre, centre, fibre, lucre, lustre, manœuvre, meagre, mediocre, metre, mitre, nitre, ochre, ogre, reconnoître, sabre, saltpetre, sceptre, sepulchre, sombre, spectre, theatre.*

## (14) Words ending in ' -ic '.

Some words in ' -ic ' add ' k ' before suffixes :

*frolic, frolick-ing* (but *frolic-some*) ; *mimic, mimick-ing* ;  
*traffic, traffick-er* ; *physic, physick-ed* ; *picnic, picnick-ing* ;  
 but : *comic, comic-al* ; *tragic, tragic-al* ; *historic, historic-al*.

## VI. THE FORMATION OF THE PLURALS OF NOUNS

## (I) General rule : add ' s ' to the singular.

Examples : *hand* (sing.), *hands* (plural) ; *house* (sing.),  
*houses* (plural).

## (2) Special rules.

- (a) Nouns ending in ' s ', ' x ', ' sh ', ' ch '—add ' -es ' to the singular.

Examples : *glass, glasses* ; *fox, foxes* ; *brush, brushes* ;  
*bench, benches*.

- (b) Nouns ending in ' -y ':

- (i) If the ' y ' is preceded by a consonant, change ' y ' into ' -ies '.

Examples : *fly, flies* ; *navy, navies* ; *lady, ladies* ;  
*duty, duties*.

- (ii) If the ' y ' is preceded by a vowel, add ' s ' (general rule).

Examples : *play, plays* ; *boy, boys* ; *guy, guys* ; *key, keys* ;  
*monkey, monkeys* ; *valley, valleys*.

(But : *colloquy, colloquies* ; *soliloquy, soliloquies*, because ' qu ' is really ' kw ', and so a double consonant.)

- (c) Nouns ending in ' o ':

- (i) If ' o ' is preceded by a consonant, add ' -es '.

Examples : *hero, heroes* ; *motto, mottoes* ; *mango, mangoes* ;  
*volcano, volcanoes* ; *echo, echoes* ; *potato, potatoes* ; *negro, negroes* ;  
*cargo, cargoes*.

Exceptions : *grotto (grottos)*, *halo*, *memento*, *proviso*,  
*tiro, piano, canto, solo* : all these take simply ' s ', and not ' es ', in the plural.

- (ii) To all words ending in 'oo', 'io', 'eo', 'yo', add 's'.

Examples: *bamboo, bamboos; cuckoo, cuckoos; curio, curios; portfolio, portfolios; cameo, cameos; embryo, embryos.*

- (d) Nouns ending in 'f' or 'fe', change 'f', 'fe' into 'ves'.

Examples: *leaf, leaves; sheaf, sheaves; thief, thieves; calf, calves; half, halves; shelf, shelves; wolf, wolves; elf, elves; self, selves (ourselves); wife, wives; knife, knives; life, lives.*

Exceptions:

- (i) Three nouns in '-fe' add simply 's' (*safe, safes; strife, strifes; fife, fifes*).

(ii) All these nouns ending in 'f' follow the general rule, and simply add 's' to form the plural: viz. *reef, reefs; chief, roof, hoof, proof, scarf, wharf, dwarf, turf, gulf, cliff, grief*. (But *hoof* also forms *hooves*).

- (e) These eight nouns form their plural by a change in the inside vowel: viz. *man, men; woman, women; foot, feet; goose, geese; tooth, teeth; louse, lice; mouse, mice; dormouse, dormice.*

- (f) These three nouns add the old English '-en' to form the plural: viz. *ox, oxen; child, children; brother, brethren* (or *brothers*).

- (g) Some nouns have the same form in the plural as in the singular.

Examples: *deer* (ten deer), *sheep* (fifty sheep), *fish* (rarely *fishes*), *salmon, yoke* (three yoke of oxen), *brace* (of birds), *dozen* (or *dozens*), *score* (twenty), *stone* (weight: ten stone), *hundredweight, pice* (four pice).

- (h) Some nouns have two plural forms, each with a separate meaning of its own.

## Examples :

*brother* :*brothers* (sons of same parents).*brethren* (members of same society).*cloth* :*cloths* (kinds or pieces of cloth).*clothes* (articles of dress).*die* :*dies* (stamps for coining).*dice* (small cubes used in games).*genius* :*geniuses* (men of genius).*genii* (fabulous spirits ; jinn).*index* :*indexes* (tables of contents).*indices* (signs used in algebra).*staff* :*staves* (sticks, poles).*staffs* (departments ; the staffs of colleges).*shot* :*shots* (discharges from a gun : ' I had two *shots* at the tiger ').*shot* (small bullets : ' I fired only small *shot* ').

## (i) Foreign plurals.

Many words have been adopted into English from foreign languages without change, and some of these retain their own plural forms :—

Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
		(Latin)	
<i>agendum</i>	<i>agenda</i>	<i>memorandum</i>	<i>memoranda</i>
<i>addendum</i>	<i>addenda</i>	<i>medium</i>	<i>media</i>
<i>datum</i>	<i>data</i>	<i>stratum</i>	<i>strata</i>
<i>dictum</i>	<i>dicta</i>	<i>alumnus</i>	<i>alumni</i>
<i>effluvium</i>	<i>effluvia</i>	<i>focus</i>	<i>foci</i>
<i>ovum</i>	<i>ova</i>	<i>fungus</i>	<i>fungi</i>
<i>erratum</i>	<i>errata</i>	<i>genius</i>	<i>genii</i>



Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
<i>radius</i>	<i>radii</i>	<i>axis</i>	<i>axes</i>
<i>terminus</i>	<i>termini</i> (and -uses)	<i>index</i>	<i>indices</i> (and -exes)
<i>formula</i>	<i>formulae</i> (and -as)	<i>appendix</i>	<i>appendices</i> (and -ixes)
<i>genus</i>	<i>genera</i>	<i>series</i>	<i>series</i>
<i>stamen</i>	<i>stamina</i>	<i>species</i>	<i>species</i>
		<i>apparatus</i>	<i>apparatus</i>
	(Greek)		(French)
<i>analysis</i>	<i>analyses</i>	<i>beau</i>	<i>beaux</i>
<i>basis</i>	<i>bases</i>	<i>bureau</i>	<i>bureaux</i>
<i>crisis</i>	<i>crises</i>	<i>monsieur</i>	<i>messieurs</i>
<i>hypothesis</i>	<i>hypotheses</i>	<i>madam</i>	<i>mesdames</i>
<i>oasis</i>	<i>oases</i>	<i>flambeau</i>	<i>flambeaux</i>
<i>parenthesis</i>	<i>parentheses</i>		
<i>thesis</i>	<i>theses</i>		
<i>phenomenon</i>	<i>phenomena</i>		
<i>criterion</i>	<i>criteria</i>		

## VII. SOME SPELLING ANOMALIES

The spelling of these words should be carefully noted, and learnt :—

<i>deceive, deceit</i>	but <i>receive, receipt</i>
<i>suffer, sufferance</i>	but <i>hinder, hindrance</i>
<i>murder, murderous</i>	but <i>monster, monstrous</i>
<i>thunder, thunderous*</i>	but <i>wonder, wondrous</i>
<i>danger, dangerous</i>	but <i>idolater, idolatrous</i>
<i>dexterous</i>	but <i>ambidextrous</i>
<i>murder, murderess</i>	but <i>emperor, empress</i>
<i>duke, dukedom</i>	but <i>wise, wisdom</i>
<i>mire, miry</i>	but <i>fire, fiery</i>
<i>liquefy</i>	but <i>liquidate</i>
<i>stratagem</i>	but <i>strategy</i>
<i>proceed</i>	but <i>procedure</i>
<i>comparative</i>	but <i>comparison</i>

## VIII. SOME SPELLING ODDITIES

<i>yacht</i> ('yot')	<i>amok</i> ('amúk')
<i>drachm</i> ('dram')	<i>annihilate</i> ('anefílant')
<i>laugh</i> ('laaf' or 'laf')	<i>barliff</i> ('báilif')
<i>draught</i> ('draaft' or 'draft')	<i>bury</i> ('bérrí')
<i>laughter</i> ('laáfter' or 'láf- ter')	<i>buried</i> ('bérrid')
<i>daughter</i> ('daútər')	<i>burial</i> ('bérrial')
<i>salmon</i> ('sámən')	<i>jeopardy</i> ('jépərdí')
<i>water</i> ('waútər')	<i>leopard</i> ('lépərd')
<i>can't</i> ('kaant')	<i>people</i> ('peépl')
<i>dahlia</i> ('dáilia')	<i>yeoman</i> ('yoámən')
<i>gauge</i> ('gaij')	<i>women</i> ('wímən')
<i>gaol</i> ('jail')	<i>woman</i> ('wümən')
<i>quay</i> ('kee')	<i>lieutenant</i> ('lefténənt')
<i>canon</i> (rule) ('kanən')	<i>colonel</i> ('kérnəl')
<i>cannon</i> (gun) ('kanən')	<i>England</i> ('íngglənd')
<i>tzar</i> and <i>czar</i> ('zaar')	<i>English</i> ('íngglísh')
<i>says</i> ('sez')	<i>key</i> ('kee')
<i>said</i> ('sed')	<i>punsne</i> ('peúní')
<i>are</i> ('aar')	<i>breeches</i> ('bríchəz')
<i>was</i> ('woz')	<i>breaches</i> ('brééchəz')
<i>wasn't</i> ('wózn't')	<i>pretty</i> ('príti')
<i>forbade</i> ('faurbád')	<i>Wednesday</i> ('weínzdí')
<i>beau</i> ('boa')	<i>phlegm</i> ('flem')
<i>Thames</i> ('Temz')	<i>apophthegm</i> ('ápothem')
<i>plaid</i> ('plad')	<i>schedule</i> ('shédeul')
<i>plaster</i> ('pláastər')	<i>clerk</i> ('kləark')
<i>aisle</i> ('eil')	<i>sergeant</i> ('saárjənt')
<i>any</i> ('eni')	<i>Derby</i> ('daárbí')
<i>many</i> ('méni')	<i>Hertford</i> ('haárfərd')
<i>moustache</i> ('mustaásh')	<i>Gloucester</i> ('glóstər')
<i>halfpenny</i> ('haipni')	<i>Leicester</i> ('léstər')
<i>all right</i> (not 'alright')	<i>Worcester</i> ('woóstər')
('aul reit')	<i>Cirencester</i> ('sístər' or 'sísís-tər')
	<i>Norwich</i> ('nórij')

<i>Windsor</i> ('wiŋzər')	<i>brooch</i> ('broach')
<i>guerilla</i> ('gerilə')	<i>broad</i> ('braud')
<i>leisure</i> ('lézhər')	<i>sure</i> ('shoor')
<i>heifer</i> ('héfər')	<i>assure</i> ('ashoor')
<i>schism</i> ('sízəm')	<i>insurance</i> ('inshoórəns')
<i>schismatic</i> ('sizmátik')	<i>twopence</i> ('tupəns')
<i>schist</i> ('shist')	<i>toward</i> ('taurd')
<i>scission</i> ('sishn')	<i>avoirdupois</i> ('averdəpoiz')
<i>scissors</i> ('sízərz')	<i>breakfast</i> ('brékfast')
<i>phthisis</i> ('teísis')	<i>shoe</i> ('shoo')
<i>phthisical</i> ('tizikəl')	<i>shoed</i> ('shood')
<i>fuchsia</i> ('feúshə')	<i>shew</i> ('shoa')
<i>guinea</i> ('giŋi')	<i>shewn</i> ('shoan')
<i>sieve</i> ('siv')	<i>sewed</i> ('soad')
<i>threepence</i> ('thripəns')	<i>coign</i> ('koin')
<i>friend</i> ('frend')	<i>buoy</i> ('boi')
<i>guitar</i> ('gitaár')	<i>money</i> ('múni')
<i>guillotine</i> ('giləteen')	<i>honey</i> ('húni')
<i>invalid</i> (noun) ('ínvələed')	<i>lose</i> ('looz')
<i>suite</i> ('sweet')	<i>loose</i> ('loos')
<i>unique</i> ('yeuneék')	<i>blood</i> ('blud')
<i>island</i> ('eilənd')	<i>flood</i> ('flud')
<i>isle</i> ('eil')	<i>buy</i> ('bei')
<i>demesne</i> ('demeén' or 'demaín')	<i>guy</i> ('gei')
<i>indict</i> ('indeít')	<i>eye</i> ('ei')
<i>guide</i> ('geid')	<i>mauve</i> ('moav')
<i>guile</i> ('geil')	<i>door</i> ('daur')
<i>beauty</i> ('beúti')	<i>floor</i> ('flaur')
<i>choir</i> ('kweir')	<i>route</i> ('root')
<i>signor</i> ('seényaur')	<i>rout</i> ('rout')
<i>busy</i> ('bízi')	<i>tomb</i> ('toom')
<i>busily</i> ('bízili')	<i>bomb</i> ('bom')
<i>business</i> ('bíznəs')	<i>gone</i> ('gon')
<i>manœuvre</i> ('manoóvər')	<i>done</i> ('dun')
<i>douche</i> ('doosh')	<i>does</i> ('duz')
<i>rouge</i> ('roozh')	<i>does</i> (deer) ('doaz')
	<i>come</i> ('kum')

*some* ('sum')  
*of* ('ov')  
*doth* ('duth')  
*move* ('moov')  
*love* ('luv')  
*two* ('too')  
*to* ('too')  
*soul* ('soal')  
*soup* ('soop')  
*chumaera* ('kimeéra')  
*chamois* ('shámwaa')  
*isthmus* ('ísmus')  
*sapphire* ('sáfeir')  
*biscuit* ('bískit')  
*boatswain* ('boásn')  
*gunwale* ('gúnl')  
*coxswain* ('kóksøn')  
*forecastle* ('foáksl')  
*rowlocks* ('rúłoks')  
*borough* ('búro')  
*thorough* ('thúra')  
*Edinburgh* ('éd'nburə')  
*cough* ('kof')  
*trough* ('trof')  
*rough* ('ruf')  
*slough* (bog) ('slou')  
*slough* (cast) ('sluf')  
*plough* ('plou')  
*though* ('dhoa')  
*through* ('throo')  
*hough* ('hok')  
*bouquet* ('bookái')  
*ballet* ('bálai')  
*burlesque* ('berlésk')  
*brusque* ('brusk')  
*ceiling* ('seéling')  
*cicatrix* ('síkatríks')

*cochineal* ('kóchineel')  
*counterfeit* ('kountərfeet')  
*forfeit* ('faúrfít')  
*foreign* ('fórən')  
*cupboard* ('kúbərd')  
*cyclopaedia* ('seiklopeédia')  
*diarrhoea* ('deiareéa')  
*diphtheria* ('diftheéria')  
*diphthong* ('dífthong')  
*dyspepsia* ('dispépsia')  
*effervesce* ('efervés')  
*eleemosynary* ('elieemózinəri')  
 —7 syllables)  
*erysipelas* ('erisípələs')  
*exacerbation* ('eksasərbái-  
 shən')  
*exasperate* ('egzáəspərait')  
*exaggerate* ('egzájərait')  
*flaccid* ('fláksid')  
*flannelette* ('flanólét')  
*giraffe* ('jiraáf')  
*haemorrhage* ('hémərɪj')  
*hippopotamus* ('hipoapótə-  
 mus')  
*heterogeneous* ('heterəjeénɪus')  
*idiosyncrasy* ('idiosínkrəsi')  
*irrelevant* ('iréləvənt')  
*lineament* (feature) ('línyə-  
 mənt')  
*liniment* (lotion) ('línimənt')  
*miniature* ('mínɪyəcher')  
*mnemonics* ('nemóniks')  
*mortgage* ('maúrgəj')  
*oscillate* ('ósilait')  
*parliament* ('paárləmənt')  
*viscount* ('véikount')  
*whisky* ('hwiški')

<i>woollen</i> (' woólŋ '	<i>aggrandisement</i>
<i>mischievous</i> (' mišçəvus '	(' agrándizmənt '
<i>blackguard</i> (' blágaard '	<i>aggravate</i> (' ágrəvait '
<i>bronchitis</i> (' brɔŋkéitis '	<i>aggregate</i> (' ágrəgait '
<i>pneumonia</i> (' neumoánia '	<i>precedent</i> (' présədənt '
<i>cataclysm</i> (' kátaklizm '	<i>president</i> (' prézədənt '
<i>caterpillar</i> (' kátərpilə '	<i>assassin</i> (' asásin '
<i>commandeer</i> (' koməndeér '	<i>bankruptcy</i> (' bánkruptsi '
<i>commissariat</i> (' komisaériat '	<i>caricature</i> (' karikəteúr '
<i>commiserate</i> (' komizərait '	<i>contumelious</i>
<i>committee</i> (' kómíti '	(' konteumeélius '
<i>comity</i> (' koməti '	<i>corroborate</i> (' koróbərait '
<i>commensurate</i>	<i>councillor</i> (member of council)
(' koménseurait '	<i>counsellor</i> (adviser)
<i>collaboration</i>	(' koúnsəlaur '
(' kolabəraíshn '	<i>conscientious</i> (' konshienshus '
<i>colonize</i> (' kóləneiz '	<i>dishvelled</i> (' dishévəld '
<i>colour</i> (' kúlər '	<i>paralleled</i> (' páraələd '
<i>coloration</i> (' kuləraíshn '	<i>tyranny</i> (' tírəni '
<i>catarrh</i> (' kətaár '	<i>eccentricity</i> (' eksentrísiti '
<i>campaign</i> (' kəmpəin '	<i>handkerchief</i> (' hánkərçif '
<i>champagne</i> (wine) (' sham-	<i>ignominious</i> (' ígnomińius '
paín '	<i>opprobrium</i> (' oproábrium '
<i>champaign</i> (open land)	<i>imminent</i> (about to happen)
(' shámpain)	<i>immanent</i> (in-dwelling)
<i>boulder</i> (' boáldər '	(' imənənt '
<i>asphyxia</i> (' asfiksia '	<i>acoustics</i> (' akoóstiks '
<i>anomalous</i> (' anóməlus '	<i>clandestine</i> (' klandéstin '
<i>anonymus</i> (' anónimus '	<i>hygiene</i> (' hejjeen '
<i>accommodate</i> (' akómədait '	<i>repertoire</i> (' répetwaar '
<i>accompany</i> (' akúmpəni '	<i>mediocre</i> (' meédioakər '
<i>accompanist</i> (' akúmpəníst '	<i>surveillance</i> (' servailəns '
<i>accompanying</i>	<i>heinous</i> (' hainus '
(' akúmpənəing '	<i>venison</i> (' vénzən '
<i>acclimatize</i> (' akléiməteiz '	<i>porpoise</i> (' paúrpus '
<i>agglomeration</i>	<i>tortoise</i> (' taúrtus '
(' agloməraíshn '	<i>syncope</i> (' sínkəpi '

*victuals* (' vítlz ')  
*bureau* ('beuróa ')  
*forehead* (' fórad ')  
*queue* (' keu ')  
*shove* (' shuv ')  
*rhythm* (' rídhm ')

*vogue* (' voag ')  
*nephew* (' néveu ')  
*syringe* (' sírinj ')  
*palate* (' pálet ')  
*palette* (' pálet ')

## CHAPTER IX

### INTONATION : STRESS AND PITCH

THOUGH, perhaps, this subject scarcely comes within the scope of this book, which is concerned with the spelling and pronunciation of single words, a short chapter on it may be of service to those readers whose native tongue is not English. When we learn to speak a foreign language, it is not enough to know the correct pronunciation of the words. To speak it naturally, we must also know the particular way in which the foreigners say their words together, in phrases and sentences. An Englishman, for example, may know Italian sufficiently to read it and speak it ; but when he first comes to talk with Italians, his speech will sound to them foreign ; and, if he does not talk with the true Italian intonation, it may, now and then, be almost unintelligible to them. And he will, on his part, find it difficult to follow their conversation till he gets used to the way in which they say their sentences. That is, he has to learn to talk Italian in the Italian way of speaking, and not in the English way. The reverse is also true ; for many French, German and Italian people can speak English well, so far as their knowledge of the language, and their pronunciation of single words, is concerned ; and yet many of them do not speak English as English people do. We say they speak English with a French, German or Italian accent. This is true, in both ways, in India also ; many Englishmen talk Urdu, for example, correctly, but in an English way, and with an English accent ; and many Indians talk English correctly, but with the Indian accent and intonation. So each sounds foreign to the other. This can be heard even in single words. For example, in saying the word *communication*, an Englishman will keep his voice level up to and including the accented syllable

(' -ca '), and then lower it ; but in the so-called ' chee-chee ' speech, so common in India, the voice will rise on ' -ca ', and again on ' -tion ', before it drops. This may be

represented thus : *communication* ; *communication*.

Even in Great Britain itself, the different dialects have intonations differing from each other, and from Standard English speech. For example, while an Englishman usually drops his voice at the end of a sentence, a Scotsman often raises it, in a sort of ' lilt '. But here we are dealing only with the stresses and intonation of Standard English speech.

By ' stress ' we mean emphasis on particular syllables and words ; and it is due to the extra force of the breath in speaking. By ' pitch ' and ' intonation ', we mean the raising and lowering of the voice in speaking ; and this is due to the vibration of the vocal chords. It is the musical element in speech.

#### I. STRESS, AND EMPHASIS

##### (i) Stress.

In this connexion, ' stress ' must not be confused with ' accent ' (for which see p. 42). Accent (also called stress) is a fixed part of the pronunciation of a word, and it never changes. In the word *párent*, for instance, the accent is always on the first syllable ; in *paréntal*, always on the second ; in *eleméntary*, always on the third ; and so on. But ' stress ' here means emphasis put on certain words and syllables for the purpose of meaning, and it may change from one to another as a different shade of meaning has to be expressed. For example, in the word *certainly*, said emphatically, the accented syllable has stress

added to it—*certainly* ; and in this sentence the stress is shifted to different words, according to the meaning—

*Where have you been ? Where have you been ? Where have you been ?*



In compound words, we generally use a 'descending' stress, that is, the first part of the word or phrase is spoken emphatically, and the second less so and in a slightly lower tone of voice (pitch). For example, we do not say *postman* with a level stress, but *postman*, emphasizing *post*, and dropping the voice on *man*. In the same way, *seagull*, *earthquake*, *bedroom*, *sunshine*, *rainbow*, *fourpence*, *sunflower*, *rainfall*, *waterspout*. But in some we give a level stress (i.e. pronounce both parts with the same emphasis): e.g. *sea-wall*, *bank note*, *steel pen*, *Bombay*, *Hong Kong*, *Hyde Park*, *high-road*.

In the same way, we speak of a *black bird* when we mean any bird of a black colour, with level stress; but when we mean a particular species of English bird called a *blackbird* we use the descending stress, emphasizing *black*, but not *bird*.

We often stress the last word of certain groups of words: for example—by *land and sea*; *bill of fare*; *somebody else*; *ten o'clock*; *good morning*; *how do you do?*; *bread and butter*; *butter and eggs*; *bread and water*; *well and fit*; *Mr Jones*; *member of council*.

The stress on a word or syllable may be different when the word is in different positions in the sentence or phrase. If such a word is followed immediately by an accented syllable, its stress is on its first syllable; if not, it is stressed on the last. For example:—

a *downstairs* room      come *downstairs*

*fourteen pence**she is fourteen**a Japanese fan**among the Japanese**afternoon tea**come this afternoon**uphill work**the road is uphill**inside out**I have a pain in my inside*

This applies only to some words.

The stressing of different words in the same sentence may alter the meaning. For example, take this simple question, *What have you done?* Pronounced without any stresses, it is a simple inquiry. But notice the shades of difference in meaning when 'what', 'have', 'you', 'done', are stressed in turn :—

*What have you done?* asks what particular task has been accomplished.

*What have you done?* means that, while others have done so-and-so, I want to know what you have done.

*What have you done?* means, I want deeds, not mere words.

*What have you done?* expresses surprise and alarm ; you have done something dreadful.

## (2) Emphasis.

Emphasis is much the same as stress ; except that it has more definite relation to meaning, and that the word is used more for the stressing of phrases or even whole sentences. We emphasize a phrase or sentence (by saying it more loudly, or more deliberately) when we want to draw attention to the importance of what we are saying. For example (phrases) :—

*Yes, the doctor came ; but too late.*

*How much did he give, you ask? Not a penny.*

*As usual, he was late for the train.*

*He was absent, with intention, from the meeting.*

*Only once have I known it to fail.*

*No doubt, given the brains, you could solve every problem.*

In the same way, whole sentences are emphasized:—

*Say what you like, I shall not come.*

*When you have done your work, you may go; but not before.*

*In spite of all this, nothing was done.*

*And remember, where there's a will, there's a way.*

*What men have done, men can do, and boys shall do.*

## II. INTONATION AND PITCH

Intonation is the rise and fall of the voice in speaking. We do not talk all the time on one note; the voice is constantly being raised or lowered as we go on. A great deal of the effect in public speaking, especially, depends on the modulations of the speaker's voice, now higher, now lower. 'Pitch' is a term borrowed from music, in which it refers to the degree of acuteness or graveness of tone—the height or lowness of musical notes. In speaking, it means much the same as intonation—the rise and fall of the voice. Correct intonation can best be taught orally. Only by hearing the changes of pitch in the voice in saying even a simple sentence, can all the subtle tones be mastered. Still, something may be done even in print with the help of signs and explanations. In the following examples,

the sign ( \ ) means a fall, and the sign ( / ) means a rise, in the pitch of the voice.

For example, *All right?* means that the voice is raised on *right* ; while *Quite right* means the voice falls on *right*.

(1) Simple Statements.

In simple statements (not questions, commands, requests or exclamations) the voice in English generally falls on the last syllable. That is, they are spoken with a descending or downward pitch. For example :—

(a) *I shall be late tonight.*

*Still waters run deep.*

*Lazy folk take the most pains.*

*He came home drunk.*

*They have all gone.*

*There is no hope.*

*Dinner is at eight.*

Now say aloud some longer sentences, and mark the drop of the voice at the end :—

*The way to success is through a series of disgusts.*

*Hope springs eternal in the human breast.*

*The Armistice marked the end of the Great War.*

*The Taj Mahal was built by Shah Jahan.*

*He said he was coming home today at four o'clock.*

(b) Still longer sentences divide themselves into two parts, both ending with a fall in the voice ; but the second part begins with a rise in pitch. For example :—

*The money he had been saving up for years was all  
lost in one night.*

*The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft  
interréd with their bones.*

*English spelling would seem to have been designed  
chiefly as a disguise to pronunciation.*

(c) In a compound sentence, consisting of two or more statements, each of them may have a descending pitch, or fall of the voice, at the end : e.g.

*He finished his tea, and went out for a long walk.*

*The clerk closed the ledger, shut up the office, and  
went home.*

*Where there's a will, there's a way.*

*The troops marched twenty miles, and then camped  
for the night.*

(d) In counting, if a person keeps his voice up, we expect him to go on :—

*One, two, three, four, five, six, . . .*

but if he drops his voice, we know he has finished :—

*One, two, three, four, five, six.*

In the same way, a change of pitch makes a difference in meaning. If one says, *She is at home*, it is a definite statement ; but *She is at home*, with a rise of the voice on *home*, is really a question. Even a single word can have its meaning changed by a change of intonation. For example, it all depends how you say *yes* and *no*, what you mean by those words. If I say *yes*, with a level pitch, I mean a simple affirmative ; but *y-e-s*, with an upward intonation, is really a question ; and *y-e-s*, with a descending pitch, means a doubtful and reluctant assent.

The same with *no* : *n-o* ; *n-o* ; the first is a definite negative, the second a question, the third a reluctant and hesitating negative. (Note that, though both these are words of only one syllable, they are drawled out in the second and third examples, with a sliding upward or downward curve of the voice.) The same is true of such words as *really*, *indeed*, *surely*. For example, *really* (with descending pitch) expresses surprise ; *really* is a question. So *indeed*, *indeed* ; *surely*, *surely*.

(e) In complex sentences, when the dependent clause comes first, it generally ends with a rise in pitch : e.g.

*When he reached home, he was very tired.*

*As it is so late, I will go to bed.*

*If you are going into the town, please post this letter.*

But if the principal clause is a question and ends in a rise of pitch, the preceding clause ends in a fall of the voice : e.g.

*When you were in Venice, did you see the Bridge of  
Sighs?*

*As you are so tired, won't you go to bed?*

When the dependent clause *follows* the main clause, it has the same intonation as the main clause would have if it stood alone: e.g.

(i) *He worked hard when he got to the office.*

*He stayed in my house when he was so ill.*

*I saw the town where I was born.*

(ii) *Did you learn Latin when you were at school?*

*Would you mind very much if I did not stay  
to tea?*

*Have you ever visited the town where you were  
born?*

RELATIVE CLAUSES. These are of two kinds, restrictive and continuative. For example: *This is the man who called yesterday*, and *This man, who is a stranger in the town, has called to see me* (i.e. *This man, and he is a stranger, etc.*). In the first case, there is a rise of voice before the relative clause: e.g.

*This is the man who called yesterday.*

*I have read the book which you so kindly lent me.*

*There is the tree that I told you about yesterday.*

On the other hand, the voice drops before the relative clause when it is continuative and co-ordinate : e.g.

*Akbar, who was a great ruler, is buried near Agra.*

*This boy, who is very clever, should do well in life.*

*That house, which is the biggest in the town, was built by my father.*

## (2) Questions.

Questions are of four kinds : (a) questions requiring the answer ' yes ' or ' no ' (e.g. *Are you tired ?*) ; (b) questions suggesting alternative answers (e.g. *Is he tall or short ?*) ; (c) questions containing an interrogative adverb, or questioning word (e.g. *Why have you come ?*) ; (d) rhetorical questions (e.g. *Are we such fools as to believe this ?*).

(a) In ' yes ' and ' no ' questions, the pitch of the voice rises from the accented syllable of the most important word in the question : e.g.

*Are you going to the dance tonight ?*

*Did he call on Thursday ?*

*Did the music please you, rouse you up ?*

*Do you like him very much ?*

(b) In questions with alternative answers, the first (and second, if more than two), is said with a rise of pitch, the last with a fall : e.g.

*Did he fail, or pass ?*

*Was the house let, or sold ?*

*What will you drink, tea, coffee, or lemonade ?*



(c) When the question contains a questioning word, like *why, who, when, where*, etc., that word shows that a question is being asked, and so a rise in the voice is not needed; so such questions often end with a fall in pitch: e.g.

*How are you? Where has he gone? What are you doing?*

(d) Rhetorical questions are those asked, not for information, but for effect. They do not expect an answer, because they contain the answer in themselves. Such questions do not call for a rise in intonation, because they are not really questions, but emphatic statements. For example: *Are we to be taken in by such lies?* means *We are not to be taken in by such lies*. So, in such questions, there is a drop in the voice at the end: e.g.

*Have we fought and suffered only for this?  
Can you expect us to credit such a statement?  
Could you ever find a finer poem than that?*

### (3) Contrasted Statements.

These, like alternative questions, take opposite pitch—low and high, or high and low: e.g.

*He was poor, but honest.  
We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths.  
He is more knave than fool.  
He did well in history, but failed in economics.  
The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

Study the rise and fall in these questions and answers :—

*Did you say common or vulgar? I said common,  
not vulgar.*

*Do you like tea or coffee? I like tea, not coffee.*

#### (4) Commands and Requests.

When these are meant to be final, the voice drops at the end, as in simple statements : e.g.

*Be quiet! Leave the room! Write this letter. Go  
home. Sit down, please. Kindly let me pass.  
Please wait a little.*

When the voice is allowed to rise at the end, it means that the request or order is not final, but that the person addressed may please himself : e.g.

*Stop a minute, please. Don't wait outside in the cold.  
You'll stay to tea. You are not going so soon.*

When a command is put in the form of a question, it ends with a drop in the pitch : e.g.

*Will you keep still? Can't you be quiet for a minute?  
Will you please sit down? Are you going to do  
what I say?*

#### (5) Exclamations.

In exclamations, which are really emphatic statements, the intonation is in falling pitch : e.g.

*What a shame! Bravo! Hurrah! Well done!*

*How jolly! How nice for you! What a pity  
you missed the play! Capital!*

Stress plays a great part in exclamations, as well as pitch, for they are emphatic statements: e.g.

*Splendid! What a mess! How perfectly awful!  
Capital!*

Notice, too, the combination of stress and pitch in these sentences:—

*It was Abdullah I was talking about.*

*What in the world are we to do now?*

*What on earth have you been doing?*

*It was his manner of saying it that I objected to.*

#### (6) Parenthetical Clauses.

When statements are, so to speak, in parentheses, they are, as a rule, spoken in a lower pitch, ending in a rise: e.g.

*This book, I may say, is by far the best on the subject.*

*I met him, to my surprise, in Bombay.*

*The matter, as I have said, is now closed.*

In conclusion, I have tried to indicate the intonation of this passage from Burke:—

*'By such management, by the irresistible operation of  
feeble counsels, so paltry a sum as three-pence in the eyes  
of a financier, so insignificant an article as tea in the eyes*

of a philosopher, have shaken the pillars of a commercial empire that circled the whole globe.'

(7) Irony.

Irony (the saying of the opposite of what we mean) is expressed in speaking entirely by intonation—the tone of the voice. (In print, we have to deduce it from the context.) For example, it all depends on how you say *You're a nice friend*, whether we mean the words or whether

we mean just the opposite. If we say *You're a nice friend*,

we mean what we say; but if we say *You're a nice friend*, we speak ironically, and mean that the person we address has let us down, and acted in an unfriendly way. Similarly,

*Of course, you are like George Washington, and cannot tell a lie! You never make a mistake. Very funny. Of course, he is always right!* These are all ironical.

PRACTICE

The best way to catch the English intonation in speaking, is to listen carefully to educated English people talking. But something may be done by practising saying different sentences and phrases, varying the stress and the pitch to express different meanings and feelings. So a few are given here for practice. Take, for example, a simple sentence like this: *Won't you come in?*

1. *Won't you come in?* (simply a polite invitation).

*Won't you come in?* (surprise and disappointment).

*Won't you come in?* (coaxingly).

*Won't you come in?* (I suppose you won't come in : it's of no use pressing you).

*Won't you come in?* (others may not, but you must).

2. *So you said* (simple agreement).

*So you said* (but you did not mean it).

*So you said* (but nobody else did).

*So you said* (but I don't believe you).

3. *I didn't say that* (simple denial).

*I didn't say that* (emphatic and indignant denial).

*I didn't say that* (but I may have said something else).

*I didn't say that* (though others may have done so).

*I didn't say that* (though I may have meant it).

4. *I always thought you were clever* (sincere opinion).

*I always thought you were clever* (ironical).

*I always thought you were clever* (whatever others thought).

*I always thought you were clever* (but I now have my doubts).

5. *Of course, you would never do a thing like that* (sincere statement).

*Of course, you would never do a thing like that* (emphatic).

Of course, you would never do a thing like that (ironical).

Of course, you would never do a thing like that (though you might do other things).

### III. PHRASING

A few words may be added on phrasing, or the right dividing up of what we say into groups of words. In speaking, we utter our words in groups, with longer or shorter pauses between the groups, to mark them off. These pauses are governed partly by the sense, and partly by the necessity of taking breath at intervals. Public speaking, and reading aloud, is largely a matter of right phrasing, as well as of right intonation. In reading aloud, punctuation is, to some extent, a guide to phrasing, the stops pointing out the heavier pauses to be made according to the sense ; but by itself it is not sufficient. We must be guided by the meaning of the passages we read, and by the natural rhythm of sentences, clauses and phrases. Speech rhythm is quite different in nature from the metrical rhythm of verse. It is flowing and free, admitting of longer or shorter, and more or less frequent, pauses, according to meaning and sentence balance. And all this we must catch, if we would be successful in reading aloud, or in public speaking. For practice, here are a few passages in prose, with the speech pauses marked by diagonal lines.

'O eloquent, just and mighty Death ! / Whom none could advise, / thou hast persuaded ; / what none have dared, / thou hast done ; / and whom all the world hath flattered, / thou only hast cast out of the world and despised. // Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, / all the pride, cruelty and ambition of man, / and covered it all over // with these two narrow words, // Hic jacet.' // (SIR WALTER RALEIGH.)

'Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation / rousing herself like a strong man out of sleep, / and shaking her invincible locks. // Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, / and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam, / purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain of heavenly radiance, / while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, / with those that love the twilight, / flutter about amazed at what she means, / and / in their envious gabble / would prognosticate a year of sects / and schisms.'// (MILTON.)

'We survey the past, / and see that its history is of blood and tears, / of helpless blundering, / of wild revolt, / of stupid acquiescence, / of empty aspiration. // We sound the future, / and learn that after a long period, / long compared with the individual life, / but short indeed compared with the divisions of time open to our investigations, / the energies of our system will decay, / the glory of the sun will be dimmed, / and the earth, / tideless and inert, / will no longer tolerate the race which has for a moment disturbed its solitude. // Man will go down into the pit, / and all his thoughts will perish.'// (A. J. BALFOUR.)

'Thus are blown away the insect race of courtly falsehoods! // Thus perish the miserable inventions of the wretched runners for a wretched cause, / which they have fly-blown into every weak and rotten part of the country, / in the vain hopes that / when their maggots had taken wing, / their importunate buzzing might sound something like the public voice! '// (BURKE.)

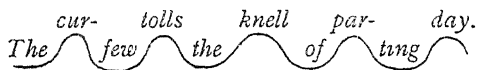
'I confess I have little faith in that quality of literature which is called national. // Literature that loses its meaning, / or the best part of it, / when it gets beyond sight of the parish steeple, / is not what I understand by literature. // To tell you, / when you cannot fully taste a book, / that it is because it is so thoroughly national, / is to condemn the book. // To say it of a poem is even worse; / for it is to say that / what should be true of the whole compass of human nature / is true only of some north-and-by-east-half-east

point of it. // I can understand the nationality of Firdausi when, / looking sadly back at the former glories of his country, / he tells us that "the nightingale still sings old Persian" : / I can understand the nationality of Burns / when he turns the plough aside to spare the rough burr-thistle, / and hopes that he may write a song or two for dear auld Scotia's sake. // That sort of nationality belongs to a country of which we are all citizens— / the country of the heart, / which has no boundaries laid down on the map.'// (RUSSELL LOWELL.)

In reading poetry aloud, two bad mistakes, of opposite kinds, are often made. Some people over-emphasize the metrical rhythm by making a heavy pause at the end of each line, whether it is at the end or in the middle of a sentence. The result is the monotonous 'sing-song' of school-children reciting their poetry lesson. On the other hand, others, in their anxiety to avoid that mistake, actually hurry over the ends of the lines, rime and all, even though the end of the line may also be the end of a sentence. They sacrifice the metrical rhythm of verse to the speech rhythm of prose. Good poetry is an inter-weaving of both rhythms, and should so be read. The metrical rhythm of verse is secured by arranging the words so that their accented syllables follow each other at regular intervals of time. It is this that produces the regular beat of verse, like the regular beat of the drum timing the dancers' feet. It may be compared to a succession of waves of sound ; and may so be represented. For example :—

*The curfew tolls the knell of parting'day*

(in which you cannot help emphasizing the syllables 'cur-', 'tolls', 'knell', 'par-', 'day', because of the accents), might be shown thus :—

*The cur- tolls the knell par- day.*  




The accent may fall on the second of every two syllables (as in this case), or on the first of every two, as in

*Dáy by dáy he gázed upón her ;*

or on the third of every three, as in

*The Assýrian came dówn like the wólf on the fólđ ;*

or on the first of every three, as in

*Touch her not scórnfúly, thínk of her móurnfúly.*

These four lines represent the four principal metres of English verse, and illustrate the fact that metrical rhythm is governed by strict rules. Speech, or prose, rhythm, on the other hand, is free, loose and flowing, and is determined only by the sense and the balance of the sentences and clauses. If the lines of a poem correspond too closely to the speech rhythm (that is, if each is a complete sentence), the effect in time becomes monotonous ; for example :—

‘ All nature is but art unknown to thee ; /  
 All chance, direction which thou canst not see ; /  
 All discord, harmony not understood ; /  
 All partial evil, universal good ; /  
 And, spite of pride, in erring reason’s spite, /  
 One truth is clear, / “ Whatever is, is right ”.’

Poetry, however, is most charming when the speech rhythm is subtly interwoven with the metrical rhythm. Read the following passage as an example, in which the natural speech rhythm is marked off at the pauses by diagonal lines :—

‘ Push off, / and sitting well in order smite  
 The sounding furrows ; / for my purpose holds  
 To sail beyond the sunset, / and the baths  
 Of all the western stars, / until I die. //  
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down : /  
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles, /  
 And see the great Achilles, / whom we knew. //  
 Tho’ much is taken, much abides ; / and tho’

We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved heaven and earth ; / that which we are, we are ; /  
One equal temper of heroic hearts, /  
Made weak by time and fate, / but strong in will  
To strive, / to seek, / to find, / and not to yield.'

In reading such a passage as this, read (first) according to the sense (that is, observing the natural pauses indicated), and (second) make a very slight pause, also, at the ends of the lines, even of those that do not mark the end of a sentence, so as just to indicate the metrical rhythm of the lines. In this way you will interweave the free speech-rhythm with the regular beat of the metre.

#### IV. UNSTRESSED WORDS IN SENTENCES

Certain words in English are pronounced differently according to their position in a sentence. When they are prominent, or emphatic, they are pronounced with their full sound ; but when they are not, they are more or less slurred over, and their vowel sounds reduced to that of the neutral vowel in unaccented syllables. So far as pronunciation is concerned, they have what are called 'strong forms' and 'weak forms'. For example, the article *the* is pronounced with its full vowel sound ('dhee') only in two cases : when it precedes a vowel (e.g. *the ass*, *the engine*, *the ox*) and when it is emphatic (as in, *This is the time to do it*).

The use of strong forms of pronunciation in unstressed positions in a sentence is a fault in ordinary conversation, and one often committed by foreigners in talking English. Careful attention to the rapid speech of educated English people will show that they do not give the full vowel sounds to words in every part of a sentence ; and, to speak colloquial English well, this has to be learnt. For example, in the following sentences, the words in ordinary type are pronounced with their full vowel sounds ; but those in

italics are pronounced in their weak forms, and to some extent slurred over —

- (a) *There is a knock at the door.*
- (b) *He said that he was ill.*
- (c) *We gave him some tea and cake.*
- (d) *What are you going to do now?*
- (e) *I am sure you must be tired after your long walk.*
- (f) *I am sorry you have had such a bad time.*
- (g) *When will you come home tonight?*

### (1) Weak and Strong Forms.

It will, perhaps, be of service to those whose native language is not English, to give a list of some of these words that are pronounced differently according to their place in a sentence.

The following lists show the strong and weak forms of the pronunciation of these words. The strong forms give their pronunciation in strong or emphatic positions in the sentence; and the weak forms, the pronunciation in ordinary conversation when in unstressed positions.

Articles	Strong	Weak
<i>the</i>	dhee	dhə
<i>a, an</i>	ai, an	ə, ən
Verbs		
<i>has</i>	has	həz, z
<i>have</i>	hav	həv, əv, v
<i>had</i>	had	həd, əd, d
<i>am</i>	am	əm, m
<i>is</i>	iz	əz, z
<i>are</i>	aar	ər, r
<i>was</i>	woz	wəz, wz
<i>were</i>	wer	wə(r)
<i>be</i>	bee	bə
<i>been</i>	been	bin, bən

Verbs	Strong	Weak
<i>can</i>	kan	kən, kn
<i>shall</i>	shal	shəl, sh'l
<i>shalt</i>	shalt	shəlt, shl't
<i>will</i>	wil	wəl, əl, l
<i>wilt</i>	wilt	olt, lt
<i>could</i>	kūd	kəd, kd
<i>should</i>	shūd	shəd, shd
<i>would</i>	wūd	wəd, əd, d
<i>do</i>	doo	də, d
<i>does</i>	duz	dəz
<i>did</i>	did	d
<i>must</i>	must	məst, məs, ms
<i>says</i>	sez	səz
<i>said</i>	sed	səd

Pronouns

<i>he</i>	hee	hə
<i>her</i>	her	hə(r, ər
<i>him</i>	him	əm, m
<i>his</i>	hiz	əz, z
<i>them</i>	dhem	dhəm, əm
<i>their</i>	dhaer	dhə(r
<i>she</i>	shee	shə
<i>we</i>	wee	wə
<i>me</i>	mee	mə
<i>my</i>	mei	mə
<i>you</i>	yeu	yə
<i>your</i>	yoor	yər
<i>us</i>	us	əs
<i>that</i>	dhat	dhət (relative)
<i>who</i>	hoo	(h)ū
<i>whom</i>	hoom	hūm
<i>whose</i>	hooz	hūz

Prepositions

<i>at</i>	at	ət
<i>by</i>	bei	bə

## Prepositions

	Strong	Weak
<i>for</i>	faur	fə(r
<i>from</i>	from	frəm, frm
<i>into</i>	intoo	intə
<i>of</i>	ov	əv, v
<i>to</i>	too	tə
<i>until</i>	until	əntəl
<i>upon</i>	upon	əpən

(Note.—When followed by a pause, or preceded by an unstressed syllable, the strong form of the preposition is used: e.g. What have you come *for*? Where is he going *to*? What were you thinking *of*? There is nothing *for* it. They were talking *to* us.)

## Conjunctions

	Strong	Weak
<i>and</i>	and	ənd, nd, ən, n
<i>as</i>	az	əz, z
<i>because</i>	bekauz	bəkoz, bəkəz, koz, kəz
<i>but</i>	but	bət
<i>for</i>	faur	fə(r
<i>if</i>	if	f
<i>or</i>	aur	ə(r
<i>nor</i>	naur	nə(r
<i>than</i>	dhan	dhən
<i>that</i>	dhat	dhət

## Other Words

<i>not</i>	not	nət, nt, n
<i>there (is, are)</i>	dhaer	dher, dhər
<i>some</i>	sum	səm, sm
<i>madam</i>	madam	mam, məm, m
<i>sir</i>	ser	sər, sə

(Note.—Strong forms are generally used:—

- (a) When the word is used as a noun (or verb): e.g.  
Your *If* is the only peacemaker; much virtue in *If*.

The articles are *the* and *a*. *But* me no *buts*. I said *and*, not *or*. If *ifs* and *ands* were pots and pans.

- (b) When the word is emphatic : e.g. I said *and*, not *or*. I said *a* book, not half-a-dozen. He is *the* man for the job. Put it *on* the table, not under. Very well ; *but*, don't ask me again.
- (c) When a word is contrasted with another word : e.g. *You* are late, but *we* were in time. I don't want *this*, but *that*.
- (d) When the word stands by itself: e.g. Abdiel was that angel's name—*who*, deserted by all, remained faithful.
- (e) When the word stands at the beginning of a sense group : e.g. *He* was the culprit. *From* whom did you get this ? *To* what do you attribute your success ? *Some* like tea, *some* like coffee.)

Examples : The sentences on p. 196, written phonetically, to show how weak forms are used in ordinary speech in unstressed positions in the sentence :—

- (a) dhər z ə nɒk ət dhə daʊr.
- (b) Hə sed dhət hə wəz ɪl.
- (c) Wə gaɪv hɪm səm tee ənd kaɪk.
- (d) Hwɒt ər yə goʊɪŋ tə duː nuː ?
- (e) I əm shoʊr yə məs bə teɪrd æftər yər lɒŋ waʊk.
- (f) I'm sɒri yə həv həd sʊtʃ ə bəd teɪm.
- (g) Hwen'l yə kəm hoʊm təneɪt ?

In rapid conversational speech, the weaker forms are more used, and there is more slurring ; those who speak more slowly and deliberately use less weak forms and more of the strong forms. In public speaking, and in reading aloud, clear articulation of syllables and words is absolutely necessary ; and so not so many of the weak forms are used.

## (2) Contracted Forms.

Even educated people freely use such shortened forms as the following in ordinary conversation. In fact it

would sound a bit pedantic to say in friendly chat, *Will you not come in ?* for *Won't you come in ?* Or *I have not any stamps* for *I haven't any stamps*. Such forms are :—

*I'm* (I am), *he's* (he is), *she's*, *it's*, *we're* (we are), *you're*, *they're*, *I'll* (I will), *he'll*, *she'll*, *it'll*, *we'll*, *you'll*, *they'll*, *I've* (I have), *he's* (he has), *we've*, *you've*, *they've*, *there's* (there is), *how's* (how is), *who's* (who is), *what's*, *where's* (where is), *that's*, *isn't* (is not), *aren't*, *wasn't*, *weren't*, *shan't* (shall not), *can't*, *won't* (will not), *wouldn't*, *couldn't*, *shouldn't*, *mustn't*, *mayn't*, *mightn't*, *haven't* (have not), *hasn't*, *hadn't*, *don't* (do not), *doesn't*, *didn't*.

### Examples :

*I'm not going, but he'll be there.*  
*We're all so glad you're so much better.*  
*Who's at the door ? It's only the baker.*  
*What's the matter ? I've got toothache.*  
*They'll be late, if they don't hurry.*  
*He hadn't a chance.*  
*Mayn't we go now ? No, you mustn't.*  
*I can't, you won't, and he shan't go.*  
*That's all right ; it'll do.*  
*How's your father today ? He's not so well.*  
*Where's my hat ? It's behind the door.*  
*We've had such a good time ; I wish you'd been there.*  
*Hadn't you better get ready ? It's five o'clock.*  
*I wouldn't do that, if I were you.*  
*Aren't you cold ? They're freezing.*  
*They weren't at school yesterday ; but they'll go today.*  
*The cat's caught a mouse. (has)*  
*The garden's full of flowers now. (is)*  
*The postman's late. (is)*  
*Jack's won a prize. (has)*  
*The workmen'll be here soon. (will)*  
*He'd have succeeded if he'd really tried. (would ; had)*

Note.—Some careless ways of speaking should not be imitated. For instance, uneducated people often say 'I dəsai', for *I dare say*. It is common, also, to hear 't' turned into 'ch' before 'y' in rapid speech: e.g. *Don't you mind?* becomes 'Doancheu meind?' or even 'Doancher'; and 'Reicheu aar' represents *Right you are!* So 'laascheer' (*last year*), 'I'll hicheu' (*hit you*). Similarly, a 'd' before 'y' or 'u' is liable to become 'j': e.g. *during* is pronounced 'jeuring'; *did you* becomes 'dijeu'; 'wūjeu meind?' (*would you*); 'houjeu doo?' (*how do you*); 'I maijeu laaf' (*made you*).







## APPENDIX

### SIMPLIFIED SPELLING

A STUDY of the foregoing pages should convince anyone of the great desirability of an English spelling reform. The question remains, however, what system of rational spelling on phonetic lines could be adopted?

One serious difficulty in the way of the adoption of a strictly phonetic system is the fact that, to represent all the sounds we use in pronunciation, a number of new signs would have to be used, so that the alphabet would consist of about forty instead of only twenty-six letters. This would mean a revolution in printing, which would be a serious and costly business. To get over this practical difficulty, several schemes for the simplification of our spelling, not involving the use of any new letters, have been put forward. The following plan is that tentatively proposed by the Simplified Spelling Society, with a few modifications.

#### I. CONSONANTS

(a) All these consonants, with their regular sounds, are retained: 'b' (*bad*), 'd' (*dab*), 'f' (*far*), 'g' (*got*—hard only), 'h' (*ham*), 'j' (*jet*), 'k' (*keep*), 'l' (*lep*), 'm' (*mad*), 'n' (*nod*), 'p' (*pat*), 'r' (*rat*), 's' (*sat*—hard only), 't' (*time*), 'v' (*vane*), 'w' (*wet*), 'y' (*yet*), 'z' (*zero*). (Eighteen in all.)

Also these digraphs: 'ch' (as in *church* only), 'sh' (as in *shunt*—hard only), 'th' (as in *thick*—hard only), 'wh' (*when*), 'ng' and 'nk' (*ring*, *rink*). (Six in all.)

(b) These consonants and digraphs are dropped: 'c', 'q', 'x', 'gh', 'rh', 'ph', 'sc'.

## (c) Substitutes for dropped signs:—

- soft 'c': 's' is used for soft 'c' (so, *civic*, *convince*, *deception*, become 'sivik', 'konvins', 'desepshun').
- soft 'g': 'j' is used for soft 'g' (so *gem*, *aged*, *plunge*, become 'jem', 'aijed', 'plunj').
- 'q': 'k' and 'kw' take the place of 'qu' (so *conquer* is 'konker', and *quest* becomes 'kwest').
- 'x': 'ks' and 'gz' take the place of 'x' (so *vex*, *axle*, become 'veks', 'aksl'; and *examine*, *exult*, become 'egzamin', 'egzult').
- 'ph': 'f' takes the place of 'ph' (so *phase*, *sophist*, *autograph*, become 'faiz', 'sofist', 'autograf').
- 'sc': 's' takes the place of 'sc' (so *sceptre* becomes 'septer'; in *conscience*, 'sh' takes the place of 'sci'—'konshens').
- 'cc': in *accident*, 'ks' takes the place of 'cc' ('aksident'), and in *account*, simple 'k' ('akount').

## (d) New Signs.

- 'zh' for soft 'sh' sound (so *vision*, *leisure*, *rouge*, become 'vizhn', 'lezher', 'roozh').
- 'dh' for soft 'th' (so *these*, *weather*, *breathe*, become 'dheez', 'wedher', 'breedh').
- 'ngg' for words like *linger* (so, 'lingger'), to distinguish them from words like *singer*. So, 'longger', but 'longing'.

The alphabet of consonant signs is, therefore: 'b', 'd', 'f', 'g', 'h', 'j', 'k', 'l', 'm', 'n', 'p', 'r', 's', 't', 'v', 'w', 'y', 'z', 'ch', 'sh', 'zh', 'th', 'dh', 'wh', 'ng', 'ngg', 'nk'. (Twenty-seven.)

## II. VOWELS

- 'a': short 'a': as in *fat*, *ram*. (So, *have*, *plaid*, *salmon*, would be spelt 'hav', 'plad', 'samon'.)
- 'aa': broad 'a': as in *kraal*. (So *father*, *palm*, *hurrah*, *aunt*, *bath*, would be spelt 'faadher', 'paam', 'aant', 'huraa', 'baath'.)

But : before 'r', only one 'a' : e.g. *bar, ari, army, hard*.

'ai' : long 'a' : as in *pagan, late*. (So, *fatal, fate, play, vein, they, reign, weigh, steak, gaol, straight*, would be spelt 'faital', 'fait', 'plai', 'vain', 'dhai', 'rain', 'wai', 'stai', 'jail', 'strait')

'ae' : long 'a' with 'r' ('aer') : as in *aeronaut, faerne*. (So, *bare, chary, pear, heir, where, prayer, mayor*, would be spelt 'baer', 'chaeri', 'paer', 'aer', 'whaer', 'praer', 'maer'.)

'e' : short 'e' : as in *hen, met*. (So, *head, any, said, says, leisure, leopard, friend, bury*, would be spelt 'hed', 'eni', 'sed', 'sez', 'lezher', 'leperd', 'frend', 'berri'.) See p. 208 for double '-i'

'ee' : long 'e' : as in *been, keep*. (So, *mete, reach, field, seize, key, police, people, quay*, would be spelt 'meet', 'reech', 'feeld', 'seez', 'kee', 'polees', 'peepl', 'kee'.)

Note.—But, before a vowel (e.g. *deist, reorganize*), and in these monosyllables, *he, be, me, she, the, we, ye*—the second 'e' dropped.

'i' : short 'i' : as in *rim, hit*. (So, *myth, pretty, live, guinea, women, busy, breeches, sieve*, would be spelt 'mith', 'priti', 'liv', 'gini', 'wimen', 'bizi', 'briches', 'siv'.)

'ei' : long 'i' : as in *seismic*. (So, *pilot, cry, thine, tyre, sign, high, height, rye, eye, isle, aisle, choir, indict*, would be spelt 'peilot', 'crei', 'thein', 'teir', 'sein', 'hei', 'heit', 'rei', 'ei', 'eil', 'eil', 'kweir', 'indeit'.)

(But 'I' would remain as the first personal pronoun.)

Note.—An alternative is 'y' for long 'i'.

'o' : short 'o' : as in *hot, drop*. (So, *gone, what, laurel, knowledge, yacht, hough, bomb, sausage*, would be spelt 'gon', 'whot', 'lorel', 'nolej', 'yot', 'hok', 'bom', 'sosej'.)

'oa': long 'o': as in *boat, roam*. (So, *note, both, old, toe, dough, mow, brooch, yeoman, shew, soul*, would be spelt 'noat', 'boath', 'oald', 'toa', 'doa', 'moa', 'broach', 'yoaman', 'shoa', 'soal'.)

Note.—'a' dropped before a vowel (e.g. *coerce, coalition, co-operate*); and in these monosyllables—*O, no, so, tho, go*.

'u': short 'u': as in *cut, run*. (So, *son, blood, does, dove, twopence, touch, one*, would be spelt 'sun', 'blud', 'duz', 'duv', 'tupens', 'tuch', 'wun'.)

'eu': long 'u': as in *feud, neutral*. (So, *tune, duty, sunt, few, value, lieu, impugn, you, beauty*, would be spelt 'teun', 'deuti', 'seut', 'feu', 'valeu', 'leu', 'impeun', 'yeu', 'beuti'.)

Note.—Words beginning with 'u' pronounced 'yeu', like *use, unit*, would be so spelt: e.g. 'yeus', 'yeunit'.

'oo': the long 'oo' sound: as in *fool, bloom*. (So, *tomb, shoe, move, soup, through, blue, rude, truth, fruit, crew, manoeuvre*, would be spelt 'toom', 'shoo', 'moov', 'soop', 'throo', 'bloo', 'rood', 'trooth', 'froot', 'kroo', 'manooover'.)

'ū': the short 'oo' sound: as in *good, soot*. (So, *foot, wolf, could, bull*, would be spelt 'fūt', 'wūlf', 'kūd', 'būl').

'au': the 'au' and 'aw' sound: as in *fraud*. (So, *lawn, tall, talk, broad, aught, ought, more, pour, lord, war, water, floor, almost, roar*, would be spelt 'laun', 'taul', 'tauk', 'braud', 'aut', 'aut', 'maur', 'paur', 'laurd', 'waur', 'wauter', 'flaur', 'aulmoast', 'raur'.)

'ou': diphthong 'ou': as in *cloud*. (So, *down, crowd, how, plough, doughty*, would be spelt 'doun', 'kroud', 'hou', 'plou', 'douti'.)

'oi': diphthong 'oi': as in *noise*. (So, *toy, buoy, coign*, would be spelt 'toi', 'boi', 'koin'.)

'er': 1. short neutral vowel with 'r': as in *withér*.  
(So, *sailor*, *collár*, *mírmur*, *lábour*, *leisure*, *ámateur*,  
would all be spelt with 'er'.)

2. long neutral vowel: as in *prefer*. (So *fur*, *irk*,  
*earl*, *word*, *err*, *myrrh*, *stirred*, *blurred*, *colonel*, would  
be spelt 'fer', 'erk', 'erl', 'werd', 'er', 'mer',  
'sterd', 'blerd', 'kernel'.)

There would be no confusion between the two,  
because the short neutral sound is confined to un-  
stressed, and the long neutral to stressed, syllables.  
No special sign is used for the short neutral vowel, for  
reasons given on page 216.

The alphabet of vowels would therefore be: 'a', 'aa',  
'ae(r)', 'ai', 'e', 'ee', 'i', 'ei', 'o', 'oa', 'u', 'eu',  
'oo', ū, 'au', 'ou', 'oi', 'er'. (Eighteen.)

In this alphabet, the following signs have been altogether  
dropped: 'ow', 'oy', 'ue', 'ew', 'ui', 'uy', 'ie', 'ay',  
'ea', 'eo', 'ey', 'oe'; and 'y' as a vowel (unless it be  
preferred to 'ei' as the sign of long 'i').

All mute letters are got rid of: so, *lamb* would be 'lam';  
*gnaw*, 'nau'; *sign*, 'sein'; *phlegm*, 'flem'; *plough*,  
'plou'; *ghost*, 'goast'; *kneel*, 'neel'; *lick*, 'lik';  
*balm*, 'baam'; *walk*, 'wauk'; *should*, 'shūd'; *hymn*,  
'him'; *autumn*, 'autum'; *mnemonics*, 'nemoniks';  
*psalter*, 'saulter'; *psychic*, 'seikik'; *pneumatic*, 'neu-  
matik'; *hour*, *heir*, *honest*, 'our', 'aer', 'onest'; *exhaust*,  
'egzaust'; *night*, 'neit'; *fasten*, 'faasn'; *listen*, 'lisl';  
*wrangle*, *wreck*, 'rangl', 'rek'; *who*, *whole*, 'hoo',  
'hoal'; *sword*, 'saurd'; *answer*, 'aanſer'; (or 'anser')  
*island*, 'eiland', *handsome*, 'hansum'; *high*, 'hei';  
*weight*, 'wait'; *thought*, 'thaut'; *though*, 'thoa';  
*phthisis*, 'teisis'.

And, as there is no mute 'e', *live*, *alive*, *gate*, *plume*,  
*home*, *scene*, would be spelt 'liv', 'aleiv', 'gait', 'ploom',  
'hoam', 'seen'.

This scheme also gets rid of double consonants, one of the bugbears of the present system. The vowel sign would itself be sufficient to show that, for example, 'hamer', 'ploding', 'wiling', 'of', 'hapines', 'kising', 'shuting', have short vowels, without having to write them *hammer*, *plodding*, *willing*, *off*, *happiness*, *kissing*, *shutting*. *Unparaleled* would be spelt 'unparaleld'.

Perhaps an exception might be made, and double 'r' ('rr') retained after 'e' to express the characteristic short 'e' sound heard in *merry*, *very*, to avoid confusion with the long neutral vowel sound expressed by 'er'. If so, then, the 'r' sound in *merry*, *terror*, would still be spelt in the same way, and *very*, *bury*, *imperative*, would be spelt 'verri', 'berri', 'imperrativ'. See pages 14 and 55.

All proper nouns to remain the same in spelling.

Note.—The only changes made here in the Simplified Spelling Society's scheme are :—

1. The substitution of 'ae' with '-r' for 'ai' with '-r', to indicate the different sound of long 'a' with '-r' and long 'a' with any other letter. See page 11, Note 2. So, the words *flare*, *stair*, *prayer*, would be spelt 'flaer', 'staer', 'praer'.
2. The spelling of words now spelt with 'or' or 'ore', with 'au' (so, 'aur' instead of 'or'); to show that the vowel sounds of words like *more*, *lord*, is not 'o' but 'au'. See page 19, Note 2. As, however, the sound of 'or' is so well established, it might be well to leave this spelling unaltered. Words like *work*, *worthy*, *worry*, would, of course, be spelt 'werk', 'werdhi', 'wuri'.
3. The use of 'ei' for the long 'i' sound, instead of 'ie'. The difficulty of using 'ie' would be felt in words like *diet*, two syllables. This word under this system would be spelt 'deiet'.

4. The use of 'eu' for the long 'u' sound instead of 'ue', to avoid difficulty in such words as *duct*, two syllables, which with 'eu' for long 'u' would be spelt 'deuet'. (Also, 'eu' is almost consistently the long 'u' sound, even in the present spelling.)
5. The use of 'oa' for the long 'o' sound, instead of oe, because so many words sounded as long 'o' are already spelt with 'oa'; such as *foam*, *coat*, *roan*, *loathe*, etc.
6. The use of the sign 'ngg' for such words as *linger*, *hunger*, *strongest*, etc., which are pronounced with two 'g's', to distinguish them from such words as *singer*, *longing*, in which 'ng' is sufficient. See p. 89. So we should write 'longger', but 'longing'.
7. The suggestion that double 'r' ('rr') be used after 'e' to denote the true short 'e' sound, as distinct from the 'er' sound of the neutral vowel.
8. The use of 'ū' for the short 'oo' sound (as in 'good'-gūd).

### III. EXAMPLES

Let us now see how this simplified spelling works in one or two well-known passages.

1. The beginning of Mark Antony's speech in *Julius Caesar*.

'Frendz, Romanz, kuntrimen, lend me yoor eerz ;  
 I kum too berri Caesar, not too praiz him.  
 Dhe eevil dhat men doo livz aafter dhem,  
 Dhe gūd iz oft intered widh dhaer boanz ;  
 So let it be widh Caesar. Dhe noabl Brutus  
 Hath toald yoo Caesar woz ambishus ;  
 If it wer so, it woz a greevus fault,  
 And greevusli hath Caesar aanserd it.  
 Heer, under leev ov Brutus and dhe rest—  
 Faur Brutus iz an onerabl man,  
 So ar thai aul, aul onerabl men—



Kum I too speek in Caesar's feuneral.  
He woz mei frend, faithfûl and just too me.

O jument ! dhou art fled too brootish beests,  
And men hav lost dhaer reezn. Baer widh me,  
Mei hart iz in dhe kofin dhaer widh Caesar,  
And I must pauz til it kum bak too me.'

2. From Newman's famous definition of a gentleman (in his *The Idea of a University*, Discourse viii, 10).

'He iz never meen aur litl in hiz dispeuts ; never taiks unfaer advaantej, never mistaiks personalitiz aur shaarp saingz faur argeuments, aur insineuaitz eevil which he daer not sai out. From a longseited proodens he obzervz dhe maksim ov dhe ainshent saij, dhat we shûd ever kondukt ourselvz taurdz our enimi az if he wer wun dai too be our frend. He haz too much gûd sens too be afrunted at insults ; he is too indolent too baer malis. Heiz paishent, faurbaering and rezeind on filosofikl prinsiplz, he submits too pain bekauz it iz inevitabl, too bereevment bekauz it iz ireparabl, and too deth bekauz it iz hiz destini. If he engaijez in kontroversi ov eni keind, hiz disiplind intelekt prezervz him from dhe blundering diskertezi ov beter thoa les edeukaited meindz ; hoo, leik blunt weponz, taer and hak insted ov kuting kleen, hoo mistaik dhe point in argeument, waist dhaer strength on treiflz, miskonseev dhaer adverseri, and leev dhe kweschun maur involvd dhan dhai feind it.'

3. From *On the Study of Words*, by Archbishop Trench.

'Langgwij, which iz ever in fluks and floa, which among naishunz which hav not invented aur adopted leterz, egzists oanli az a sound, we meit befaurhand hav aseumd wûd proov dhe frailest, dhe moast untrustwerdhi, ov aul veeiklz ov nolej ov dhe paast ; dhat wun which wûd moast sertenli betrai its charj. Soa far, houeever, from dhis beeing dhe fakt, it iz dhe main, ofenteimz dhe oanli, konekting link between dhat paast and our prezent ; it iz ofenteimz an ark

reiding abuv dhe wauterfludz dhat hav swept awai aur submerjd evri udher landmark and memaurial ov beigon aijes and vanisht jeneraishunz ov men. Far beyond aul riten rekaurdz in a langgwij, dhe langgwij itself strechez bak, and oferz itself faur our investigaishun—"dhe pedigree ov naishunz", az Johnson kaulz it—itself a far oalder and at dhe saim teim a far maur instruktiv moneument and dokeument dhan eni reiting which emploiz it. Dhe riten rekaurdz mai hav been faulsifeid bei kaerlesnes, bei vaniti, bei fraud, bei a multiteud ov kauzez; but langgwij iz never fauls, never deseelv us, if oanli we noa hou too kweschun it areit.'

4. Keats's Sonnet: 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer'.

'Much hav I traveld in dhe relmz ov goald,  
And meni gūdli staitz and kingdumz seen;  
Round meni western eilandz hav I been  
Which bardz in feealti too Apollo hoald.  
Oft ov wun weid ekspans had I been toald  
Dhat deep-broud Homer roold az hiz demeen,  
Yet did I never breedh its peur sreen  
Til I herd Chapman speak out loud and boald:

Dhen felt I leik sum wocher ov dhe skeiz  
When a neu planet swimz intoo hiz ken;  
Aur leik stout Cortez when widh eegl eiz  
He staerd at dhe Pacific—and aul hiz men  
Lūkt at eech udher widh a weild `sermeiz—  
Seilent, upon a peek in Darien.'

No doubt this new spelling looks very odd at first sight. But if it, or any sound form of simplified spelling, came into general use, we should quickly get so accustomed to it that we should notice its oddness no more than we now notice the much greater oddness of our conventional ways of spelling. It has several great advantages over the present system. It is rational and consistent, being based

on the phonetic principle of one sound, one sign, and one sign, one sound. Once learn the sounds of, say, 'i' and 'ei', 'g' and 'ch', and you could never go wrong in the use of them in spelling and pronunciation. Secondly, it could be learnt easily and quickly. Half an hour's study of the new alphabet should be enough to enable anyone to spell any words, known or hitherto unknown to him, without hesitation. Thirdly, once the signs and their sounds were learnt, no further memory work would be required; so the weakest speller would be relieved of the necessity of consulting the dictionary for the spelling of words, and of pestering his friends with the question, 'How do you spell . . .?' Further, it would tell the reader at a glance how a word new to him should be pronounced. Fourthly, if this, or a better, system of spelling based on the same principle, should be adopted, it would save our children an enormous amount of their valuable school time, and would relieve adult weak spellers of much worry and shame.

In the meantime, the reader is recommended to try a little practice in writing out passages for himself in this suggested simplified spelling. Just as an experiment, try it for yourself. Take passages out of any book you may be reading, and transliterate them on this system of spelling. You will find it a rather amusing occupation for a spare moment; and it will also benefit you in more than one way. First, it will force you to examine your own pronunciation of words; for at every turn you will have to translate your pronunciation into the given fixed symbols. This may possibly show you that some of your pronunciations are wrong, and so may lead to their correction. Further, it will more forcibly convince you of the irregular and illogical nature of conventional spelling. For example, it will show you that you really pronounce *attempt* and *dreamt* in the same way. The present spelling of *attempt* leads you to think that you pronounce the 'p' in the word; but you do not, for you say *dreamt*, with no

'p', in just the same way. So the 'p' is mute, and therefore superfluous. The same with *mussel* and *rustle*, which sound just the same, showing that the 't' in the latter word is useless. How do we really pronounce *exhaust*? Do we pronounce it as it is spelt—'eks-haust'? We are misled by the spelling to think we do; but we do not. We do not pronounce the 'h', and we do not say 'eks', but 'egz'. So we should spell the word 'egzaust'. In the same way, because *holly* is spelt with double 'l', we imagine we pronounce two 'l's'; and yet in *solid* there is only one 'l', and the sound is the same. We do not really say 'hol-ly', but 'holi', and so it should so be spelt.

Some have objected that any such system of phonetic spelling would cause confusion by spelling some quite distinct words exactly alike. For instance, *vein* (blood-vessel), *vain* (conceited), and *vane* (weathercock), would all be spelt 'vain'. But such objectors seem to forget that we have already, in our present spelling, quite a number of such homonyms (see page 122); and yet they do not seem to cause any great inconvenience. Certainly they are nothing like so troublesome as those misleading words treated of in Chapter VII, which are spelt in the same way but pronounced differently. Such confusing words could not exist in any phonetic system of spelling, in which every sound would be represented by its own sign, and by no other.

Another argument against reformed spelling is that all the books printed in the present spelling would become so much waste paper. This, however, would not be so; for we could read books printed in the old as well as in the new spelling. Old books would not lose their value nor be superseded in our generation if a new spelling were adopted. At first, printers would use the old or the new, whichever they or the writers preferred; but the new would win its way by its merits, and gradually be adopted. Grown-up people would read in both; and the younger generation would be brought up to the new spelling. And

even they could read books in the old, though they could not write in it. Shakespeare and Milton spelt very differently from the way in which we spell today; yet their works have not suffered by being printed, as they are for us, in modern spelling; and we can read them easily in the original editions, if we want to, and in the new as well. To give an extreme example, take a verse of an old song of the thirteenth century, two hundred years before Shakespeare, and three hundred before Milton. With a little trouble, we can read it today even in its old spelling:

‘ Sumer is icumen in,  
 Lhude sing cuccu !  
 Groweth sed, and bloweth med,  
 And springth the wude nu—  
 Sing cuccu ! ’

Put this into modern spelling:—

‘ Summer is coming in,  
 Loud sing cuckoo !  
 Groweth seed, and bloweth mead,  
 And springeth the wood now—  
 Sing cuckoo ! ’

Now let us spell it according to this simplified system:—

‘ Sumer iz kuming in,  
 Loud sing kūkoo !  
 Groaeth seed, and bloaeth meed,  
 And springeth dhe wūd nou—  
 Sṅg kūkoo ! ’

In the first line, we seem to have gone back in spelling nearly seven hundred years !

Whatever system of simplified spelling may in the end be adopted, does not much matter; provided that it be simple and rational, and founded on the phonetic principle of one, and only one, sign for each sound, and one, and only one, sound for each sign. Spelling reform of some kind, so long as it be on sound lines, is urgently required; and it is to be hoped that the efforts of scholars to get

some sensible system adopted will be crowned with success. Sir George Hunter, M.P., who has done much to bring this question before the public and the educational authorities in England, has thus summed up the reasons for spelling reform :—

- ' 1. It will make English spelling perfectly simple and easy to learn.
2. A simplified spelling will save at least one year, and in some cases as much as two years, of school time (not, of course, only in learning to read, or even in learning to spell).
3. It can be taught by consistent and rational methods, without confusing the children's minds or their ideas of right and wrong.
4. It will improve and standardize English pronunciation, and assist in checking the vulgarizing and deterioration of the English language.
5. It will improve the standard of English education.
6. It will allow more time for teaching religion, morality, citizenship, music, poetry, history, or arithmetic or economics, or for athletic or health exercises, or handicraft work.
7. Anyone who uses the simplified spelling will be able to read books in the old or the new spelling without difficulty.
8. It will be easy to print, and will reduce the cost of printing.
9. It will encourage and assist the people of other countries to write and speak English as a second or auxiliary language.
10. It will (and this, too, is very important) make English the most useful and easily acquired world language, for intercourse within the Empire and between nations.'

Sir George Hunter's eighth point is confirmed by an extraordinary declaration of Mr George Dewey, Hon. Secretary of the United States Simplified Spelling Board,

at the English Language Congress in Philadelphia some years ago. He said: 'I made the easily proved statement that, as compared with a simple one sign one sound fonetic alphabet, . . . the measurable and preventible economic waste due to our conventional spelling exceeded one million dollars a year. Two-thirds of this is in the mere writing and printing of superfluous letters; one-third, the net cost to the taxpayer of the appalling waste of time in elementary education.'

#### IV. ONE WORD MORE

In one respect, the scheme for a simplified spelling outlined above is not perfectly phonetic inasmuch as it does not provide for any separate sign for the neutral vowels in unaccented syllables. To do this would, however, be very difficult; for, as H. W. Fowler pointed out in his *Modern English Usage*, 'it would be peculiarly hard to reconcile (it) with the keeping together of word families, owing to the havoc played on syllable sounds by variation of stress (in *fraternity*, *fraternize*, three vowel sounds are metamorphosed by the shifting of the stress).' We have had plenty of illustrations of this difficulty in Chapter III. However, what we require is a workable system, and this omission involves no practical loss. So long as the sounds of the vowels in *accented* syllables are consistently represented by one exclusive sign for each, we should go on pronouncing unstressed vowels, as we do now, with the neutral vowel sounds.

All the same, something might, and should, be done to regularize the spelling of the multifarious unstressed word endings or terminations (see Chapter VIII). Their diverse spellings for the same neutral sounds are so many traps for the weak speller. He is puzzled whether certain words are spelt with '-ary' or '-ery', or '-ory'; with '-ant' or '-ent'; with '-able' or '-ible'; with '-ice' or '-ace'; with '-el', '-al', '-il', or '-le'; with '-ite' or '-ate'; with '-us' or '-ous'; with '-y', '-ie', '-ey',

or '-e'; with '-ies', '-eys', or '-es'; and whether certain nouns are to be spelt with '-er', '-or', '-our', '-ar', '-eur', '-ure', or '-re'.

In all such cases, one spelling should be adopted for all the words involved in each group, and the rest dropped. For example, '-er', which is in some phonetic systems the sign for the unstressed neutral vowel, might be chosen as the spelling of all nouns ending in '-er', '-ar', '-or', '-our', '-ur', '-ure', '-eur', and '-re'; in which case *thinker*, *scholar*, *sailor*, *labour*, *murmur*, *nature*, *sombre*, would be spelt 'thinker', 'skoler', 'sailer', 'laiber', 'mermer', 'naicher', 'somber'.

In the same way, '-eri' might be the spelling of all words ending in '-ery', '-ary' and '-ory', like *flattery*, *votary*, *cursory*; which would be spelt 'flateri', 'voateri', 'kerseri'.

Just as a further example of what is meant, consider the numerous ways in which the 'sh' sound with terminations is now spelt. See pages 93-4. In all cases, of course, 'sh' would take the place of '-si', '-ti', '-ci', etc.; and (as short 'u' sound is, perhaps, the nearest approach to the unstressed neutral sound), '-un', '-us', '-ul', '-unt' might be used for the terminations. On this plan, the following words would be spelt thus:—

*mansion* ('manshun'), *mention* ('menshun'), *passion* ('pashun'), *ocean* ('oashun'), *suspicion* ('suspishun').

*gracious* ('graishus'), *vexatious* ('veksaishus'), *conscientious* ('konshienshus').

*special* ('speshul'), *partial* ('parshul').

*patient* ('paishunt'), *patience* ('paishuns'), *conscience* ('konshuns').

In some of these words, the final consonant would be enough without any vowel sign; for example, 'oashn', 'menshn', 'parshl'.





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